Energy dep't finds Meralco rate hike 'excessive'

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Arafat siege nears end

HEBRON, West Bank—Dozens of Israeli tanks backed by helicopter gunships swept into the divided city of Hebron early on Monday, killing seven people, witnesses and Palestinian security sources said.

Hebron, where 400 Jewish settlers live in heavily guarded enclaves among 120,000 Palestinians, was the only major West Bank city not reoccupied

ARAFAT/A18

Macapagal foes join forces

They want Estrada to revoke 'leave of absence'

By Martin P. Marfil, Carlito Pablo and Donna S. Cueto

THE REMOVAL from office of President Macapagal-Arroyo and the revocation of Joseph Estrada's "leave of absence" were among the points raised by political groups and personalities from the Left and the Right who met yesterday to discuss ways of changing the system.

"Pagbabago, Ngayon Na (Change, Now)" was held at the historic Club Filipino in Greenhills, San Juan, under the auspices of the Philippine Consultative Assembly (PCA), a staunch Macapagal critic. Among the speakers were Sen. Gregorio Honasan, former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, Sanlakas leader Wilson Fortaleza, Moro National Liberation Front panel member Mashur Jundam and Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) spokesperson Jesus Crispin Remulla.

Lt. Col. Diosdado Valeroso, a leader of the Young Officers' Union, sent a speech that was read for him.

"All of us who are here are members of the broad coalition," PCA secretary general Linda Montayre said in Filipino. "Some still (classified) as secret . . . are also members of the coalition."

Their basis of unity is the planned formation of a parliamentary government that would have a federal character, Montayre said.

Asked if they had allied with pro-Estrada forces, she said: "Yes, definitely. We have an alliance with all

MACAPAGAL/A18

GOING OFF INTO THE SUNSET EDWIN BACASMAS

Not just yet for President Macapagal and husband, Mr. Mike Arroyo, but only to romance the Tubbataha Reef in Palawan, to dive into its "wealth of wonders" and stroll through the white sands that border the blueness of the Sulu Sea. ***(Story on Page A6.)***

GMA down, rivals up in latest Pulse Asia survey

By Carlito Pablo

ARE Filipinos starting to trust the political opposition more than President Macapagal-Arroyo?

A nationwide survey conducted by Pulse Asia from March 22 to April 10 found that Ms Macapagal's net trust rating declined in the first quarter while those of former President Joseph Estrada and Senators Edgardo Angara and Panfilo Lacson increased.

Net trust rating is the percentage of those who gave someone "big trust" minus the percentage of those who gave her/him "small trust."

The President's net trust rating slipped from 33 in the last quarter of 2001 to 23 during the first three months of the year.

Ms Macapagal's mark was even three points behind Sen. Joker Arroyo's net trust rating of 26. The senator is a conscientious critic of both the Macapagal and Estrada camps.

The 1,200 respondents were responding to the question in Filipino: Can you say whether you have big or small trust for (name)?

Pulse Asia noted that between December and April, public trust in the President fell "most sharply in Luzon excluding Metro Manila (from 55 percent to 40 percent), the better-off class ABC (from 51 percent to 40 percent) and among male respondents (from 56 percent to 46 percent)."

Angara "appears to be much trusted by the public," getting a net rating of 48. Pulse Asia said it was the first time that Angara was trust-rated in the first quarter of 2002.

Estrada's net trust rating stood at -1.

GMA DOWN/A18

MOCK trial of President Macapagal is held at the Club Filipino in San Juan on Monday with Sen. Gregorio Honasan and PCA secretary general Linda Montayre among opposition forces present united in common cause. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Gloria mad at adviser for spilling 2004 plans

By Carlito Pablo and Juliet L. Javellana

AS EXPECTED, President Macapagal-Arroyo denied she would run in 2004 and reprimanded presidential adviser Norberto Gonzales for announcing that she would.

"I called him on the telephone this morning. When I read that news item (in the INQUIRER), I got angry with him, I told him he has no right to announce on my behalf whatever political plans I have," the President said during her weekly radio interview.

But her coalition allies in Congress were not surprised at the Gonzales announcement saying "it's logical for us to support her."

Gonzales himself anticipated the President's denial. During an interview with the INQUIRER last week, he explained why she remains coy about declaring her intentions for the presidential elections in 2004.

Gonzales, who advises Ms Macapagal on "special concerns," said that the Filipino political culture demands politicians to be vague about their political plans even to the point of denial until the last minute.

Gonzales, who said during the same interview that Ms Macapagal is indeed running in 2004, explained the denial game keeps off potential rivals while allowing an aspirant to build alliances.

"The President is a seasoned politician," Gonzales said. "She is just conforming to this culture."

Gonzales admitted during the interview that the supporters of Ms Macapagal are putting up two parallel coalitions—one among traditional

GLORIA MAD/A18

'Do not panic,' FVR tells Gloria in Malacañang

By Dona Pazzibugan

"DON'T panic."

Former President Fidel V. Ramos showed up in Malacañang yesterday to offer both President Macapagal-Arroyo and increasingly vocal enemies calling for her ouster the same advice.

"Do not panic, Madame President. And to those in the opposition, (I say) do not panic also because you are going to fail," he said.

He confidently declared that the military and police would not support the ouster call. "Ask me. Not that I have anything to do with this. But I have old-hand experience in the ways of the Armed Forces and the PNP as well as their families. Who after all are the fathers of today's AFP commanders but

DO/A18

LABOR DAY PACKAGE

Gloria rules out pay hike for workers

By Dona Pazzibugan

WORKERS can't expect a wage increase from President Macapagal-Arroyo on Labor Day.

The President said yesterday that a wage increase would not be part of her announcements on May 1 as Filipinos had the highest pay increase among Asian workers last year.

"Labor Secretary (Patricia Sto. Tomas) has prepared some things that I will announce on that day," the President said in her weekly radio interview.

"But I'd like to say that since salaries went up last year and in fact the highest increases in Asia were in the Philippines, what's important now is (how to keep) the prices of prime commodities (down)," she said.

The President has ordered Energy Secretary Vince Perez to find ways to bring down electricity rates, particularly the item for purchased power adjustment, which accounts for at least half of the monthly electricity bill of most consumers.

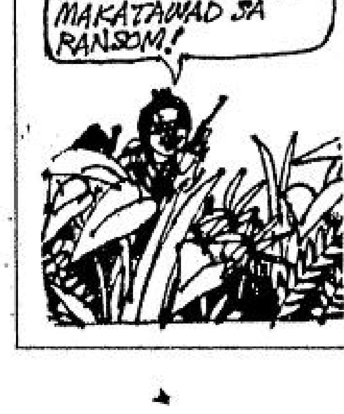
Ms Macapagal pointed out that pay increases were not a result of government intervention, but of collective bargaining between labor unions and management.

The President admitted that jobs were still scarce. But she said she was able to bring down the unemployment rate from 11.3 per cent when she assumed office in January 2001 to 10.3 per cent a year later.

"We generated 1.5 million jobs but I know that a 10.3-percent (unemployment rate) means many are still job-

GLORIA/A18

Sabaya 'welcomes' US troops



MAKIPAG NEGOTIATE NA LANG KAYO PARA MAKATAWAD SA RANSOM!

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya has a message for American troops now on war games in Basilan. "Welcome to the party."

In a phone interview with the Radio Mindanao Network station in this city aired yesterday, the bandit leader twitted the United States and its host, the Philippine government, for failing to crush the bandit group.

"This is a real embarrassment to the US and Philippine governments. We are

SABAYA/A19

SOBRA NAMAN!

Meralco hike excessive—DOE

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE MANILA Electric Co.'s proposed "unbundled" rates are "excessive and unjustifiable," according to an energy department study released yesterday.

The study found that Meralco had apparently included in its unbundling petition a request to increase the extent of its allowable profits, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said in a news briefing.

The Electric Power Industry Reform Act has required power utilities to unbundle power rates to ensure transparent and reasonable prices of electricity.

Unbundling refers to the itemization of the total monthly power charges into generation, transmission, distribution, supply and other components.

Meralco has submitted a petition to unbundle its rates, but in the process would charge its customers P1.12 more per kilowatt-hour.

Perez said the law did not intend the unbundling of rates to affect the revenues of the utilities but said it was typical of them to use the opportunity to increase their profits.

"In its petition, Meralco computed a 16.95-percent return on its rate base (RORB) of P16.3 billion," Perez said.

PEREZ

The RORB is the basis for computing Meralco's rate charges and is in turn based on the assets that the company uses to provide this service.

'Reasonable' RORB

Perez said a Supreme Court ruling in 1971 had pegged a "reasonable" RORB of a maximum of 12 percent for public utilities.

Meralco treasurer Rafael Andrada said in an earlier interview that if the firm's petition was approved as submitted, Meralco's RORB would go up to about 11 percent.

The firm needs an RORB of at least 8 percent to meet its debt obligations.

Perez said that Meralco had also asked to be allowed to increase to 11.5 percent the "systems loss" that it can pass on to consumers.

Systems loss pertains to costs incurred mainly from pilferage and illegal tapping of power lines.

The Electric Power Industry Reform Act repealed an earlier law that set a systems loss cap of 9.5 percent.

The new law left it to the Energy Regulatory Commission to set a new figure.

Systems loss

Meralco has reported a 10.4-percent systems loss for 2001. The 0.9 percent that exceeded the cap accounts for at least P900 million in revenue losses for the firm.

Perez explained Meralco's apparent plan to increase rates as resulting from the gap between the base year of its petition and the last time it raised rates.

Petitions for unbundling of rates use 2000 costs as their basis. Meralco's last rate hike was in 1994.

The department's findings have been submitted to President Macapagal-Arroyo, Perez said.

"We expect her to appeal to Meralco to seek only the minimum needed return," he said.

The energy secretary also clarified that the decision on what to do about Meralco's petition still rested with the ERC.

ERC chair Fe Barin declined to comment on the energy department's findings. She said the ERC was conducting its own study.

"There is no inconsistencies in what the energy department and the ERC are doing," Barin said.

On April 17, the ERC rejected an appraisal report on Meralco's assets, prompting consumer groups to ask for the dismissal of the power utility's petition.

Meralco has asked the ERC to reconsider its ruling on the appraisal report.

Tax on text: Nani joins public outcry

By Michael Lim Ubac

JUSTICE Secretary Hernando Perez yesterday joined the opposition to the proposed tax on text messages, which, he said, would curtail freedom of speech.

Perez said the proposed tax measure was uncalled for.

"It's just like (imposing) tax on everything one says over the phone or through (text) messages," he said at a press conference.

Perez said it was impossible to impose a tax on speech, which is guaranteed by the Constitution.

He explained that for a tax measure to be implemented it must be "practical, collectible, fair and equitable."

"Those proposing it should reconsider and think about it," he said.

The government would have a difficult time getting support for its implementation, he said.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho had broached the idea of taxing phone text messaging to raise more revenues.

Perez likened the proposed tax to the move in the past to impose a special property tax on tombs.

"But how can you tax a graveyard when people can't pay the tax? Dig the graveyards?" he asked.

PEREZ

But the justice secretary said the proposed tax would not be illegal if it is approved.

As the best way to go about it is to increase the cost of the prepaid card, Perez raised the question whether the enforcers could distinguish between the prepaid card was being used for text messaging or for phone calls.

He said the government would have a hard time distinguishing voice from text.

"It's very hard to do. Segregating voice from the text (will) require a lot of money. We might end up spending more in monitoring the number of text messages than raising new revenues," he said.

Palace backs video board on Erap docu

By Carlito Pablo

MALACAÑANG said yesterday the Videogram Regulatory Board "conducted itself consistently and professionally" when it stopped the airing of the pro-Joseph Estrada documentary "Ama ng Masa."

Acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable said the Partido ng Masang Pilipino, the deposed president's party, and R&R Productions and Promotions failed to comply with a VRB requirement that they secure a "special commercial permit" from the agency.

"The requirements for the airing of this video are routine in nature and the fees are not exorbitant," Afable said. "It is very easy for any legitimate business entity to get this permit."

Based on a chronology of events furnished by the Palace, the PMP, through its media bureau chief Joseph Sy, wrote the VRB on Dec. 10, 2001 asking for a permit to mail "Ama ng Masa" in VCD (video compact disc) form to all local government and non-government officials nationwide.

Sy had told VRB chair Lualhati Bautista the documentary was not intended for commercial use.

The VRB issued a "transport clearance" for the mailing of the VCD with the understanding that it "shall be for private/personal use only."

On Jan. 22, 2002, Sy wrote the VRB again manifesting his group's intention to register as the commercial distributor of the documentary.

The PMP, however, failed to submit the documentary requirements and pay the fees amounting to P2,650.

The VRB received another letter dated April 4, 2002, this time from R&R Productions and Promotions applying for the same license. R&R also reportedly failed to comply with the requirements.

The VRB thus asked the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board on April 24 to request the Iglesia ni Cristo-owned Net25 network and the privately owned ABC 5 television station not to air the film, the chronology showed.

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BANK PACKAGES

Rewards await witnesses against Erap, says lawyer

By Volt Contreras

"REWARDS" await Equitable-PCIBank officials who testify against ousted President Joseph Estrada, his lawyers said yesterday at the resumption of their client's plunder trial.

Prospero Crescini, one of Estrada's 13 court-appointed lawyers, said "support" packages had been arranged by the bank for its officers, Manuel Curato, Clarissa Ocampo and others, who testified against Estrada at his impeachment trial last year and again at his criminal trial this year.

Curato and Ocampo have testified to being seated beside Estrada in Malacañang when he signed the name "Jose Velarde" to bank documents the two had brought to him on Feb. 4, 1999.

The "support packages" proviso was contained, Crescini said, in resolutions passed by the bank's board before and after Estrada's aborted impeachment trial.

At the last hearing of the plunder case, the defense panel asked the court to subpoena the two EPCIB board resolutions dated Dec. 19, 2000 and Feb. 20, 2001.

The first resolution, Crescini said, "authorizes management to provide legal, financial, logistical and other support" to any official or representative of the bank who may testify at the impeachment trial.

The second resolution, he said, makes such officials "entitled to support even after the termination of their employment with the bank for such duration as may be reasonably determined by management."

This could suggest, he said, "they will be well-rewarded for testifying against the principal accused."

The lawyer had the two provisions marked as exhibits for the defense.

The two resolutions were presented in court during the resumption of Crescini's cross-examination of Curato.

In earlier statements outside the court, the defense team said Curato and the other EPCIB witnesses had testified at the impeachment trial primarily "to save the bank" after its image took a beating over the "Jose Velarde" issue.

At yesterday's hearing, another prosecution witness from the Ombudsman's office said she received death threats the other day warning her against testifying.

Henrietta Roque, chief of the Ombudsman's records section, said an unknown party texted the following message to her husband's cellphone on Sunday:

"*Hoy, Henrietta, 'wag kang magpakita. Pag natiyempuhan kita, papatayin kita, pu——mo* (Hey, Henrietta, don't show up. If I catch you, I'll kill you [expletive])."

The justices allowed Roque's statement to stay on the record, despite the objection of the defense panel, which found it "derogatory" to the accused.

Roque's main testimony, though, consisted of her confirming that Estrada submitted three Statements of Assets and Liabilities to the Ombudsman—in June and December 1998 and in December 1999.

The three SALs marked as exhibits yesterday showed that Estrada's net worth was P32.7 million in June 30, 1998; P33.4 million in Dec. 31, 1998, and P35.8 million in Dec. 31, 1999.

Estrada is accused of amassing more than P4 billion by dubious means in the year and a half of his presidency. The money was allegedly deposited in the Jose Velarde account at Equitable-PCIBank. He has steadfastly denied the charges.

Pro-Erap leader ordered to refute rebellion charge

By Michael Lim Ubac and Jerome Aning

THE JUSTICE department yesterday ordered the detained pro-Estrada leader, Ronald Lumbao, to refute the rebellion charges filed against him by the government in connection with the May 1st siege of Malacañang.

The 36-year-old Lumbao, who heads the People's Movement Against Poverty consisting of supporters of ousted ex-President Joseph Estrada, was asked to submit his counter-affidavit and evidence during the preliminary investigation scheduled for May 8.

Lumbao yesterday asked to be transferred to a new detention cell because he considered the detention cell of the Anti-Terrorist Task Force where he was held for the past three days "a dungeon," his lawyer Rick Valmonte said.

Lumbao wants to be transferred to the detention cell of the Anti-Carnapping Task Force where conditions were "not sub-human," said Valmonte.

Lumbao remains confined at the Camp Crame hospital after suffering high blood pressure four days ago.

After almost a year of being hunted down, Lumbao was arrested in Quezon City last Thursday.

He is accused of inciting thousands of pro-Estrada supporters to assault Malacañang on May 1, 2001 during the so-called "Edsa Tres."

State Prosecutor Emmanuel Y. Velasco, who is handling the rebellion case, has required Lumbao to be present during the preliminary investigation.

Velasco attached to the subpoena the "complete copies" of the rebellion complaint and the supporting documents submitted to the justice department by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of the Philippine National Police.

Velasco said failure on the part of Lumbao to comply with the subpoena would be considered a waiver.

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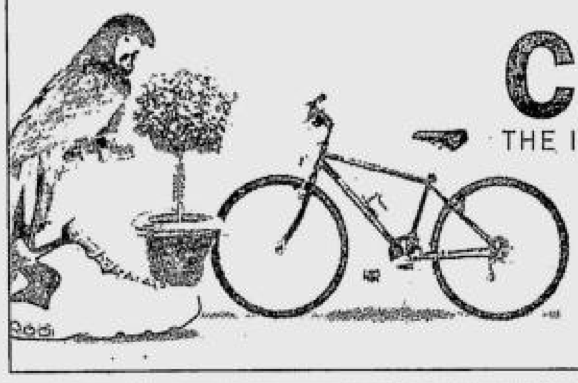

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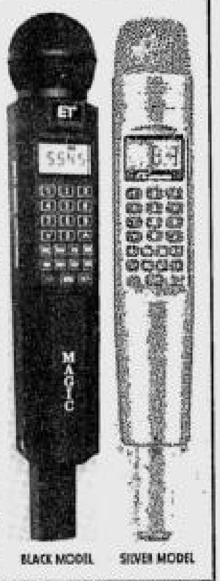

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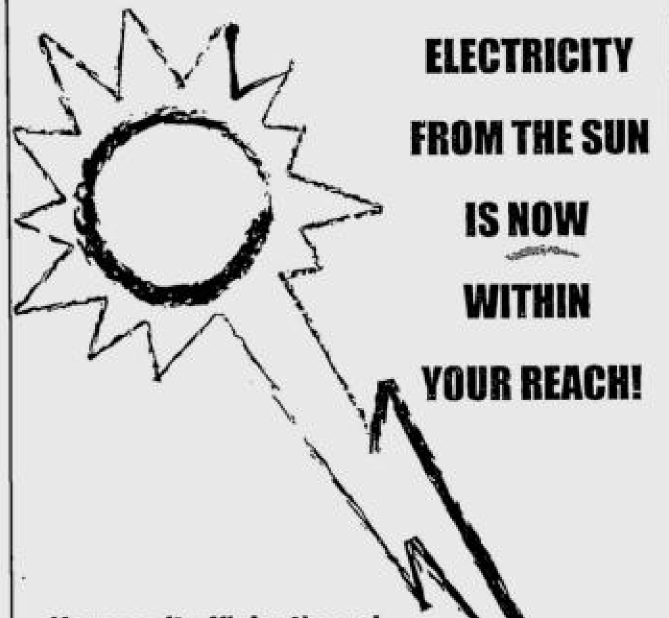

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Prof delivered P2-M ransom for Arlyn—military

By TJ Burgonio and Rocky Nazareno

MONEY changed hands for the release from captivity of broadcast journalist Arlyn de la Cruz, with no less than a professor of the University of the Philippines delivering the P2 million in ransom, a confidential military report said.

The report did not say who received the money, but it did say that Prof. Mashur bin Galib Jundam, who was working with Sen. Loren Legarda for De la Cruz's release, delivered the ransom to an undisclosed place in Barangay Anoling, Indanan, Sulu on Saturday morning.

De la Cruz, 32, was released at the boundary of Patikul and Indanan at around 5:40 a.m. on Saturday after three months in captivity.

The report, also dated Saturday, April 28, linked the Abu Sayyaf to the kidnapping of the broadcast reporter, saying the agreement for her release was finalized between emissaries of the Abu Sayyaf and Legarda's group somewhere in Metro Manila on Friday night.

Legarda's group included her husband, Tony Leviste, a Board of Investments director and former Batangas governor, and De la Cruz's godmother, Cherry Cobarrubias, an aide to former first lady Imelda Marcos, the report said.

"The ransom was initially P11 million. Due to pressure exerted by government troops on the Abu Sayyaf through continuous military operations, the amount was lowered to P2 million," it said.

Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya, deputy chief of staff, said, however, that he was not aware of the report.

"I have not read any military report that says that. Are you referring to the statement of our commanders there?" he asked.

However, Abaya said the military would debrief De la Cruz on her allegations Moro National Liberation Front integrees had snatched her in Jolo, Sulu, on Jan. 19.

"We'd like to know the details of her allegations," he said.

Yesterday, Legarda and Cobarrubias continued to deny that ransom had been paid.

Legarda also took exception to reports she had grabbed the credit for De la Cruz's release from Sen. Noli de Castro, who was known to be negotiating the journalist's freedom.

"I couldn't care less where the credit goes. What's important is Arlyn has been freed and is out of harm's way," Legarda said.

Legarda said she was not the only one involved in the negotiations.

"Cobarrubias was there. And Senator De Castro was also negotiating. All of these were parallel efforts with one objective—to free Arlyn," she said.

Many people were expecting a confrontation between the two administration senators at the Senate yesterday, but this fizzled out after Legarda and De Castro exchanged "*beso-beso*" (air kisses) just before the session started.

Legarda said Jundam approached her on Feb. 3, asking that she help in negotiations to free De la Cruz.

"But after that, I had to go abroad. Then I had a miscarriage. So I really couldn't focus on it for a while," she said.

On April 13, Jundam called her again. That call led to her participation in the talks and culminated in freedom for De la Cruz two weeks later.

"(Her abductors) relayed to me that they just wanted to release Arlyn. But they did ask if I would help put up more madrasas (schools) in Jolo," Legarda said.

Cobarrubias reiterated that no ransom was paid for De la Cruz's release after her kidnappers realized that no money was forthcoming.

She said she was the one on top of the negotiations for the release of her godchild.

She said the kidnappers released the 32-year-old journalist after a "long process of negotiation," which included the assurance that authorities would help them out of their poverty through livelihood projects. ***With Christine O. Avendaño and Cynthia D. Balana***

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Tuesday, April 30, 2002
5th Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 14:19-28
Gospel: Jn 14:27-31

Jesus said to his disciples, "Peace be with you; I give you my peace. Not as the world gives peace do I give it to you. Do not be troubled; do not be afraid. You heard me say: 'I am going away, but I am coming to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

I have told you this now before it takes place, so that when it does happen you may believe. It is very little what I may still tell you, for the ruler of this world is at hand, although there is nothing in me that he can claim. But see, the world must know that I love the Father and that I do what the Father has taught me to do. Come now, let us go.

Commentary

Jesus says, "I give you MY peace." Not the kind we are sold in the happy faces of the advertisements. The peace of Jesus endures, even as he feels distress and fear, even as he knows Judas is going to betray him and Peter's bravado will not stand the test of reality, even as he knows that "the ruler of this world is at hand." His peace has the same root as his joy – union with the God he calls Father, who possesses his heart so entirely that to love this Father and make him known is like a thirst, the great passion of his life. Love is shown by laying down our lives, daily, in small ways. For example, laying down the newspaper to see and listen to those with whom we live or work.

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21 Taiwanese arrested for poaching

TWENTY-ONE suspected Taiwanese fishermen were arrested off Cagayan and Batanes for alleged illegal entry and poaching, the Department of Foreign Affairs reported yesterday.

DFA Spokesperson Victoriano Lecaros said the 21 Taiwanese nationals were nabbed aboard three fishing vessels.

Lecaros said initial reports reaching the DFA showed that the first two fishing vessels were spotted to have entered the country's territorial waters on April 17 off Cagayan while the third vessel was accosted by the Philippine Coast Guard on April 24 off Batanes, Lecaros said.

The Taiwanese nationals were being subjected to investigation, he said.

The DFA official said the National Committee on Illegal Entrants has yet to submit a final report on whether or not the Taiwanese were caught poaching endangered marine species.

The Taiwanese were being held in Aparri, Cagayan, he said.

Lecaros said appropriate charges were being prepared by authorities against the Taiwanese.

Gloria's 'letter' to George W

MALACAÑANG has intercepted a letter President Macapagal-Arroyo purportedly wrote to the "Great World Leader," US President George W. Bush, that has been going around for the past couple of months.

In the 10-page letter dated Nov. 20, 2001, Ms Macapagal purportedly "asked" Bush to re-establish US military bases in the country.

She also "offered" to start a signature campaign to petition the US to declare the Philippines as a commonwealth.

National Security Adviser Roilo Golez yesterday gave Malacañang reporters copies of the spurious letter "for the entertainment of the media."

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DOTC chief goes through wringer anew

THE COMMISSION on Appointments meets again today to take up anew the confirmation of Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez and other presidential appointees.

Alvarez expressed optimism that he would be finally confirmed with resolutions of support coming in from various sectors in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, according to a press statement from the Department of Transportation and Communications.

"We see no justification for any more delay in the confirmation of the appointment of DOTC Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez," a joint resolution issued by the different organizations said.. "The national interest suffers because many urgent and vital programs initiated by the secretary in the department are being delayed or placed in jeopardy due to the unjustified delay in his confirmation."

The DOTC said five business groups, including the country's largest organization of businessmen, have endorsed Alvarez's confirmation. These are the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Employees Confederation of the Philippines, Philippine Confederation of Exports and Women in Business and Philippines Inc.

In a joint resolution, they expressed their "trust and confidence in the integrity, sense of justice and trustworthiness of Alvarez." Signing the resolution were Miguel Varela of PCCI, Donald Dee of Ecop, Sergio Ortiz-Cruz Jr. of PCE and ·Isabelia Palanca of WBPI.

Comelec officials' row erupts anew

ON THE EVE of the resumption of the hearings of the Commission on Appointments, four commissioners of the Commission on Elections filed a new opposition to Comelec chair Alfredo Benipayo and two other commissioners in the new outbreak of hostilities in the election body.

The commissioners who comprise one faction of Comelec revealed new irregularities committed by the other faction composed of Benipayo and Commissioners Resurreccion Borra and Florentino Tuason Jr.

In their statement, Commissioners Rufino Javier, Luzviminda Tancangco, Ralph Lantion, and Mehol Sadain said the three appointees had once again disregarded the Comelec's collegial nature to force through their version of the implementing rules on the special registration for the Sangguniang Kabataan elections.

The four commissioners said the three appointees had rammed through what they called a faulty resolution even before Congress had passed the law setting the SK and barangay elections in July.

The latest outbreak of hostilities followed efforts by leaders of the major political parties and President Macapagal-Arroyo to smoothen relations between the two factions.

The four were appointed by former President Joseph Estrada and the three commissioners seeking confirmation were appointed by President Macapagal.

Last month, the majority group filed an opposition to the Benipayo group's confirmation, claiming the three had had consistently failed to observe collegiality in the operations of the constitutional body.

The four commissioners said the Benipayo group had unilaterally made decisions that should have been decided by the Comelec en banc. In Benipayo's case, they said these included his purchase of a luxury van for his own use, unlawful appointments and transfers of key Comelec officials, his refusal to promulgate duly signed en banc resolutions, and failure to submit the Comelec's proposed budget for approval by the en banc.

The four said they were opposing the three appointees' confirmation anew "for their irregular act of signing a resolution (on the special SK registration) based on a legislative act that was not yet passed into law; attempting to compel the undersigned commissioners in joining the said resolution, and failing this, disseminating the resolution to the election officers nationwide, thereby causing confusion among the election officers, the youth registrants and the agencies involved in the SK registration."

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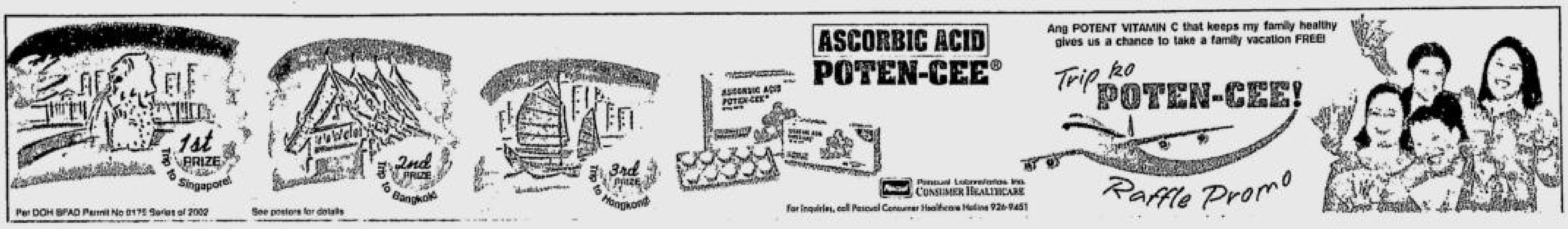
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Poaching threatens Tubbataha

PUERTO PRINCESA—Nine years after the United Nations Cultural Organization (Unesco) named the Tubbataha Reef a global treasure trove, poaching remains a key problem.

Comprising two long atolls covering an area of 10,000 hectares, the Tubbataha Reef, located 150 km from Palawan on the central Sulu Sea, is one of the top dive spots in the world.

It is also eyed by poachers for its rare corals and sea creatures.

At least 372 species of corals are said to be in the reef compared to 50 species in the entire Caribbean Sea. There are also 415 species of fish, from decorative aquarium fish to highly prized commercial species such as jacks and groupers.

The poachers who steal these genetic riches are mostly foreigners, particularly fishermen from China, a senior Navy commander in the area said.

Between 1995 and mid-2001, there were 27 intrusions of illegal fishermen off Palawan, 13 of them involving Chinese and the others comprising Vietnamese, Malaysians and Taiwanese, according to government statistics.

Because divers go to the Tubbataha Reef only during March and May to avoid the stormy monsoons, poachers stalk it during the off-peak diving season.

This, despite the fact that the reef is a complete no-take zone, closed even to traditional local fishermen.

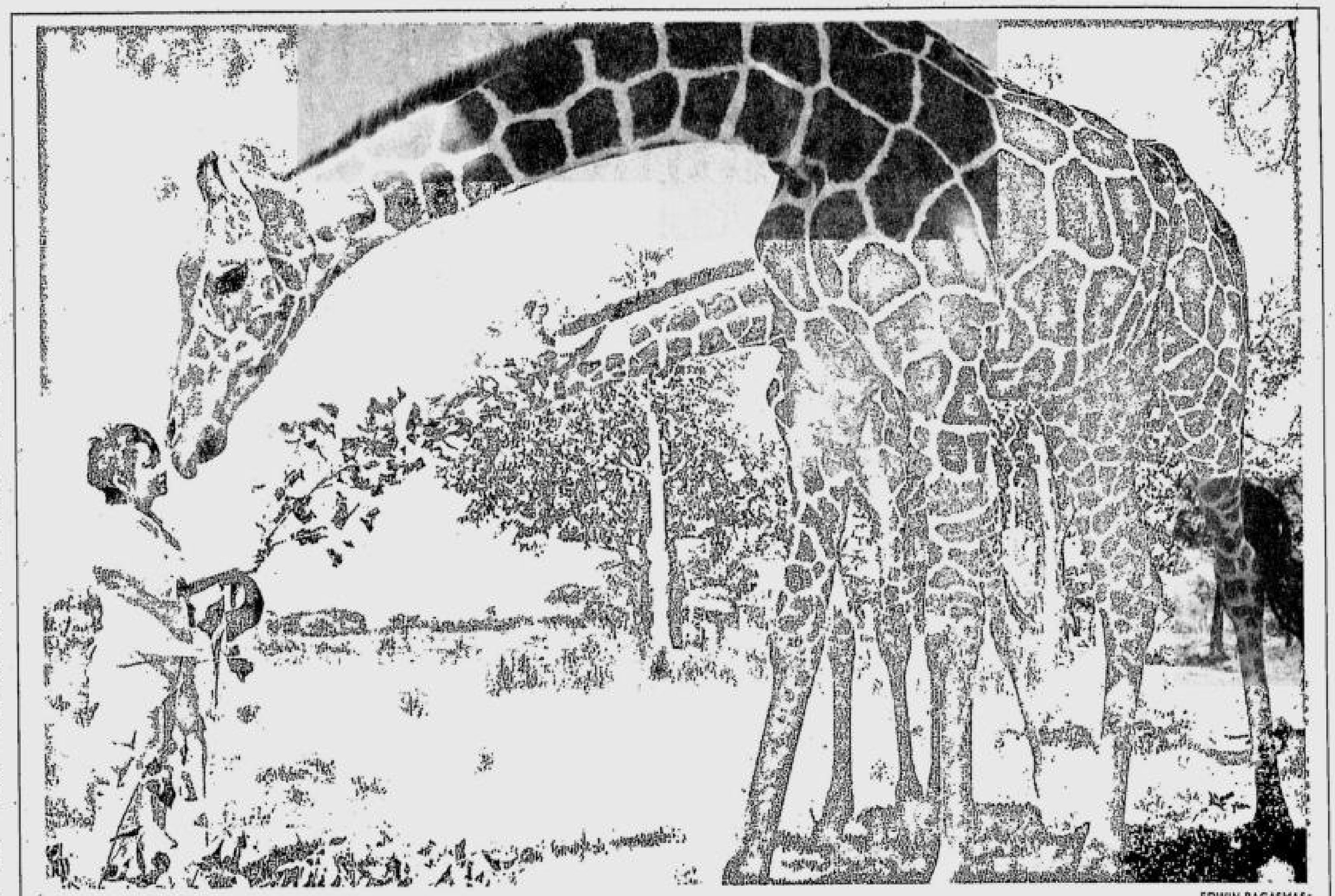
The government had designated the reef the country's first national park five years before the Unesco decision, but lacks adequate financial support and manpower to safeguard the large area.

In late January and February, 116 Chinese fishermen in at least four vessels were caught for alleged poaching.

The Taiwan-owned boats were found to be carrying cyanide and dynamite for use in fishing as well as sacks of meat taken from giant clams, a protected, endangered species, and rare corals.

The authorities described it as one of their biggest enforcement successes. The fishermen, all from the southern island of Hainan, face a variety of charges, including illegal fishing, and could end up with 20-year prison terms if convicted.

The Chinese, some of whom are second offenders, are being locked up in a provincial jail in Puerto Princesa awaiting their cases to be heard. *AFP*



EDWIN BACASMAS

REACHING OUT

President Macapagal-Arroyo and a couple of giraffes reach out to each other during the President's visit to the wildlife sanctuary on Calauit Island over the weekend.

Gordon eyes Spratlys as tourist destination

By Jerome Aning

COULD the disputed Spratly island group, a possible regional flash point because of the many competing claims to it, become the country's next big tourist destination?

Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon thinks so, as he urged domestic and foreign tourists yesterday to "sample the wealth of wonders" waiting to be discovered in the Spratlys which the Philippines claims as the Kalayaan island group.

The Spratlys, a group of several islets and atolls located west of Palawan in the South China Sea, could be marketed as the Philippines' "last frontier," Gordon said.

"The Kalayaan islands would not fail to enchant visitors with their white sand beaches and the pristine waters of the blue South China Sea," the tourism chief said.

"It would be a treat to nature lovers who will find their sojourn there a discovery-filled adventure," he added.

But apart from the Philippines, the Spratlys are also claimed—wholly or in part—by China, Malaysia, Brunei, Vietnam and Taiwan.

All but Brunei occupies several of the islands and maintains military troops in the island group, which is believed to contain rich oil deposits.

Gordon said a group of media people, which the Navy took on a recent tour of the Philippine-occupied islands of Lawak, Likas and Kota were "all agog over the prospect of turning the area into an ecology-tourism haven."

"It is inhabited by majestic seabirds, giant turtles and countless other animal and plant species," he said.

Navy Vice Admiral Victorino Hingco, who facilitated the media trip, announced that the municipalities and councilors leagues of Palawan would be holding their regular conference on Pag-asa island next week, coinciding with the town fiesta.

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DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

US won't establish bases here—Angara

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE UNITED States is not likely to seek a permanent basing agreement with the Philippines because the country has lost its strategic importance to America as a permanent base site.

Sen. Edgardo Angara made the statement yesterday, adding he doubted reports the US was building a forward base in Mindanao with the ongoing construction there of roads and airstrips by visiting US soldiers.

Angara said the US has been closing its overseas bases, not adding to them, because it has a more mobile, flexible war strategy.

"I don't think the US is interested in maintaining bases in the country," he said.

Angara said the former US military bases in the country—Clark and Subic—were strategic to the US military at the height of the Cold War. "This is not so in the current context," he said.

He said the US could launch attacks from its aircraft carriers in the China Sea, then proceed from there.

He said permanent basing does not fit into their picture.

Philippine military officials, however, did not let an opportunity pass to reiterate to visiting US joint chiefs of staff chair Gen. Richard Myers their request for more air and sea craft to combat terrorism in the country.

Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya, deputy chief of staff, said the Filipino officials stressed their need for the equipment to Myers during a round-table discussion on Saturday.

"What we hoped at that round-table discussion was to impress on the general that we are doing our best to combat terrorism in the country, while recognizing the deficiency in our equipment," Abaya said during a briefing.

Abaya said, however, that Myers made no commitment but "he was taking down notes."

Myers, who arrived Friday night, visited American troops taking part in joint military exercises with Filipino soldiers in Mindanao on Sunday. He later left for Okinawa, Japan.

Abaya said the military had earlier forwarded its request for C-130 planes, UH-1H helicopters and Cyclone Class sea craft to the US government. ***With TJ Burgonio and Philip C. Tubeza***

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Church told: Be humble

By A. Nocum

THE ROMAN Catholic Church hierarchy should exercise "humility" in acknowledging that it does have problems with priests engaged in sexual abuse.

The head of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines noted the virtue of humility was cited by their counterparts abroad in their Church protocol to address the sexual problems of priests.

CBCP president Archbishop Orlando Quevedo said he wants the local Church to adopt the same protocol.

"We must recognize that humility is essential if we are to care for the victims and prevent abuse in the future," Quevedo wrote in the weekly paper, "The CBCP Monitor."

The protocol also admonishes that "concealing the truth is unjust to victims, a disservice to offenders and damaging to the whole Church community."

An Appeal to the Commission on Appointments:

DECIDE

to confirm Comelec Chairman Benipayo and Commissioners Borra and Tuason

Just 14 months into their term, **Comelec Chairman Alfredo Benipayo,** together with Commissioners Borra and Tuason have already achieved the following:

§ **Saved the Philippine Government more than P60 million** so far this year in award of bids for Comelec materials, compared with awards for the same materials in 2001

§ **Professionalized the Selection and Promotions Board** pursuant to Civil Service Commission rules and regulations

§ **Led the conduct of peaceful and orderly elections in the ARMM** on November 26, 2001

§ Caused **expeditious resolution of cases** pending before the Comelec

§ Focused the **Comelec Election Modernization Plan** in accordance with Republic Act 8436

§ Initiated an **unprecedented partnership between Comelec and the private sector to finally implement the automated system of counting and canvassing of ballots** in time for the 2004 Presidential elections

§ Became the **first Filipino** selected by his peers in the Asian community **to head the Association of Asian Election Authorities (AAEA)**

We believe that the Comelec will benefit from the **prompt action of the Commission on Appointments** especially in light of the current impasse within the Comelec. The Comelec **needs strong and professional leaders** who can **enhance** the **integrity of the electoral process** and **strengthen public confidence** in the institution.

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(MBC)

Donald Dee, President
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Gloria's generals

EDITORIAL

HAVING once been the country's highest-ranking successor-in-waiting, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo knows what it means to wait. Maybe that is why some of her appointments have been characterized, not so much by an economist's careful weighing of costs and benefits, but by a politician's impatience. She must have hated waiting then, and she does not like waiting now. Or how else explain the case of the generals?

Last year, without so much as a by-your-leave to national police Chief Leandro Mendoza, she announced that Deputy Director General Hermogenes Ebdane would succeed him—many months before the effective date of his retirement. The immediate effect was inevitable: heightened uncertainty in the officer corps and in the ranks, as the ambitious and the disgruntled began maneuvering. That, in turn, directly led to Malacañang's dance of the awkward. Yes, Ebdane was indeed next, Palace and police spokespersons said. But no, Mendoza will not necessarily leave on retirement day.

This month, the President was at it again, announcing the appointment of three more deputy directors-general in the Philippine National Police. This brings the number of three-star generals to six, the most since the country's police forces were demilitarized after Edsa I. She defended her decision by saying she was within her legal rights, but Interior Secretary Joey Lina revealed the true nature of the appointments when he explained that the promotion of Edgardo Aglipay, Reynaldo Velasco and Clyde Fernandez was in preparation for the retirement of Rex Piad and Edgar Galvante.

When are they due to retire? In September—five months from now.

To be sure, there were other explanations: For instance, PNP spokesperson Leonardo Espina said that the promotion of Aglipay, Velasco and Fernandez was not regular but special. He said they were "spot promotions," because the three played "pivotal roles" during Edsa II and in the defense of Malacañang during the May 1 siege.

As this explanation shows, Espina is new at his job, and lacks practice in the art of the plausible. What we know of spot promotions is that—by the very name—they are made on the spot. The paper work may take some time, but the promotions take place right where the action is, so to speak. Isn't it a little too late to claim spot promotions for events that are at least one year old?

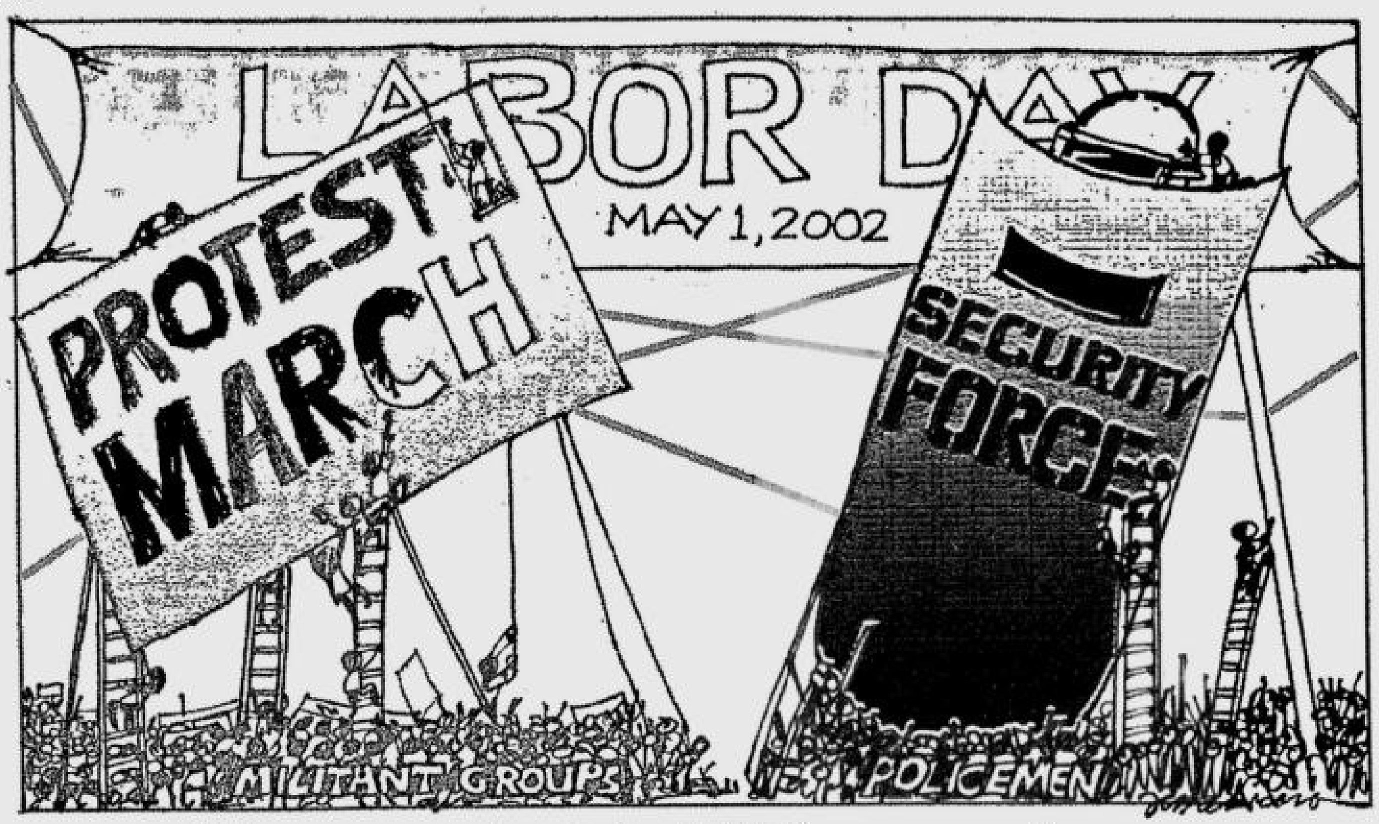
We have no quarrel with the qualifications of the three new deputy directors-general, but what is more probable is that their promotion—at this time, five months before a scheduled retirement—was made for political reasons. It certainly sends a strong and clear signal to the rest of the country's hundred thousand policemen, that to the victors truly belong the spoils.

The uproar over having too many top generals in the PNP is mirrored in the race for the next Armed Forces chief of staff. That it is in fact a race is only the most disquieting aspect.

Persistent reports say that Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes wants Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu, Southern Command chief, to succeed Gen. Diomedio Villanueva, even though he isn't the most senior candidate.

It must be said that seniority is often overrated. (And the subject of the occasional snide remark, as New York Times columnist and political lexicographer William Safire has noted. The idea of "old fogy," he said, may be rooted in the military practice of paying senior servicemen with a special supplement called "phogies.") The notion of "deep selection" is also an old one; Reyes himself was the product of a deep selection process when then-President Joseph Estrada appointed him chief of staff.

But appointing Cimatu does not seem to be a mere exercise in presidential prerogative. It carries a contentious corollary: the chief of the AFP's largest area command is due to retire in July. While such a short-term appointment is not unprecedented, it is almost certain to create more problems than it solves. Again, we do not gainsay the candidate's qualifications. But we must point out that his appointment will raise the inevitable question: Is he being appointed because he is the most deserving, or because he has the right connections?



Why your electric bill keeps going up

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

YOU must have noticed that your electric bill keeps going up. No matter how hard you try to reduce electric consumption, the next monthly bill is always higher than last months. If you look at your Meralco bill, even if your power consumption remains the same or goes down (that is the figure under "Cons." Or "ENERGY kWh") the total bill you have to pay goes up.

Let us use my own Meralco bills as an example. For the bill dated April 24, 2000, I consumed 338 kilowatt hours of electricity. My total bill was P1,658. More than a year later, in the March 22, 2002 bill, I consumed only 309 kWh—less than the April 24, 2000 bill—but my bill has risen to P2,014.10. How did that happen?

We are quick to blame Meralco because it sends the bill and collects the payment, but to be fair to Meralco, the steadily rising bills are not its fault. The faults are with two other components of the Meralco bill: the Purchased Power Adjustment (that is the figure marked PPA in our bill) and the Currency Exchange Rate Adjustment or Cera (that is the figure marked "Currency Adj.")

Going back to my Meralco bills, it showed that the PPA rate for 4-24-00 was only 1.395 but on 3-22-02, it was 3.211. In pesos, it was worth P992.20. The Cera (or the currency adjustment rate) was only 3.25 in the earlier bill but has jumped up to 6.09 in the new bill. In pesos that was worth an additional P64. Put together, the PPA and the Cera amounted to P1,056.20. My power consumption was worth only P1,050.60. The PPA and Cera more than doubles my monthly bill to P2,106.80. (There is a reduction of P92.70 under the new Power Act so the total bill goes down to P2,014.10.)

What are the PPA and the Cera? These are what are called "cost adjustment mechanisms" to allow power utilities to automatically recover additional costs resulting from factors that are not within the control of the utility such as increases in the price of imported fuel, the devaluation of the peso (imported fuel is paid in dollars), and the changes in the cost of electric power bought from private producers. These are changes in costs which the utilities cannot recover through the basic rate, according to the Energy Regulatory Commission.

The basic rate, on the other hand, recovers the operating and maintenance expenses, the cost of purchased power and the cost of fuel used in operating electric power plants at the time such rate was filed and then approved by the ERC. The basic rate, according to the ERC, remains the same for a certain period until the utility files for an adjustment, which is subject to the approval of the ERC. This is what Meralco and 135 other power firms have done: file petitions for an increase in their basic power rates.

The PPA reflects changes in the cost of power purchased from private producers, the so-called Independent Power Producers (IPPs). They sell the power they generate from their own power plants to the electric utilities, including the National Power Corp. (NPC). The price of electricity bought from the IPPs fluctuates; this fluctuation is not within the control of the power utilities.

An ERC primer states that when the current price of electricity bought from IPPs (or from the NPC) for distribution utilities such as Meralco increases from what was considered in the utilities' basic rate, an increase in the PPA takes place. On the other hand, when the cost of electricity bought from IPPs falls below the basic rate, there is a corresponding decrease in the PPA.

Like the NPC, the IPPs import fuel to operate their oil-based power plants. Any increase in the world price of fuel means an increase in their cost of operation. Similarly, their foreign-related costs will increase whenever the peso devalues against the dollar.

The change in fuel cost and the cost of purchased power are passed on to the distribution utilities through the Fuel and Purchased Power Clause (FPCA). The combined cost is translated as PPA in the bills of the consumers of the Meralco and other distribution utilities.

If the distributor buys electricity only from the NPC, there are no additional costs added to the FPCA except for the cost of distribution system losses (electricity lost through transmission of theft by consumers).

However, if the distributor buys from IPPs and the NPC, the PPA charged to the consumer will include the FPCA and the cost of power purchased from IPPs, plus the distribution losses.

The Cera reflects the fluctuations in the peso-dollar exchange rate. Electric utilities have dollar loans to finance their operations which are paid in dollars. When the peso depreciates, the Cera goes up. It is also used to recover additional costs due to increases in foreign-related expenses arising from devaluation, such as spare parts and other materials which are imported.

The Cera covers only changes in the principal portion of payments of the loans of the utilities. Any additional amount of interest payments due to the devaluation is shouldered by the utilities. The Cera also does not include increased cost of fuel due to devaluation. That is covered by the PPA.

Do the PPA and Cera yield additional profit to the utilities? No.

The PPA and Cera, which doubles your electric bill, does not go to Meralco or the other distributors. It goes to the government through the NPC. The general impression is that Meralco is the big, bad greedy wolf that gets everything we pay. That's because Meralco bills us and collects the payment. But Meralco is only the vendor and bill collector for the government, a job for which it does not even get any commission.

Meralco does not generate electricity. It only distributes it to consumers. It buys the electricity from the NPC and the IPPs.

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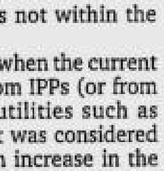
One year later

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

THE FIRST anniversary of the "rebellion of the poor," a.k.a. "Edsa III," is a good time to look at what President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has done over the past year.

The good news is that she has done better than Erap.

There were two regimes that were brought down by an act of people power, Marcos' and Erap's, and they shared something in common: They were not just corrupt, they were rotten to the core.

There was corruption before martial law, there was corruption during Corazon Aquino's and Fidel Ramos' time, and there is corruption today, in Ms Macapagal's time. And the scale of pillage may be even bigger than that of Erap. Certainly, the pillage of Kamaganak Inc., which swooped down like birds of prey on the loot left behind by the Marcos cronies, was no little league. The same was true of the Ramos administration. Someone described the Amari deal as the "mother of all scams." The description is not undeserved.

But the Erap administration, just like Marcos', did more than steal the nation's wealth, it stole the nation's trust. I said then that Erap was turning the nation into a "gangster state." I was not exaggerating. At the very least, that was so because some of the members of the so-called "midnight Cabinet," the cabal that met in the witching hour at Malacañang to peddle influence and lies, to gamble and drink and show off their women, were literally gangsters.

As in Marcos' time, there were no limits to where government went to favor cronies. Erap's decision to scrap the country's air treaties with Taiwan was a case in point, a move that favored Lucio Tan but disfavored the nation. It discriminated against the riding public, particularly the overseas Filipino workers in Taiwan, and the tourism and hotel industries, which now had to contend with fewer guests. The Erap administration even went so far as to sanction Tan's demand for the PAL unions to accept a 10-year moratorium on collective bargaining.

The result of all this, as in the last years of martial law, was anarchy and drift. One businessman described it to me in these terms. "Of course you had to pay off officials too during Cory's and Ramos' time, but at least there were rules. There was a degree of predictability to the corruption. There was no such thing in Erap's time. Everything depended on whim. That was why business fell. There were no rules."

President Macapagal has clearly done better in terms of restoring the trust at least of the business community. She has done better in terms of bringing back rules to business. The corruption is there—her husband has merely served as a convenient buffer or cushion for it—but it is "factorable," to borrow my friend's term for it.

The bad news is that this is offset by other things Ms Macapagal has done, or not done.

I've said my piece on the implications to the future of democracy in this country of allowing US troops here. Of a policy of turning generals into heroes, of turning warlords into champions of anti-terrorism, of turning Filipinos into war freaks while believing they are living out an action movie. When the history of this country is written 10 years from now, when "anti-terrorism" has lost its resonance, like MaCarthyism in the 1960s, Ms Macapagal will be fiercely indicted there. She will go down in the books as the unelected President who replanted the seeds of militarism, if not fascism, in this country in the name of fighting evil.

It remains only to see how she did in improving the plight of the poor.

Ms Macapagal of course never vowed to be the opposite of Erap. It was Aquino who vowed to become the opposite of Marcos. But it is a natural expectation we have of people whom we put in power by an act of people power, that they be the antithesis of the tyrants they expel.

Erap was the one leader who raised the hopes of the poor, who vowed to act to rescue the poor from their lot. *"Erap para sa mahirap"* was his battle cry, the phrase that catapulted him all the way to Malacañang. He depicted himself as one with the poor, if not of the poor, and showed his solidarity with them by partaking of their lowliest repasts in the lowliest of their abodes. That picture of him eating *tuyo* with his hands in a poor man's hovel remains a powerful image. But that is all it is, a fleeting image, an image without substance. All Erap did was cover the stench of poverty with the deodorant of show biz.

Which has made it a ticking time bomb. There is no more urgent, pressing, and life-and-death problem facing us today than the plight of the poor. Alleviating that plight is not just a question of priority, it is a question of survival. The explosion of rage that was the so-called "Edsa III" shows so. Some of us may imagine that that was a fluke, occasioned by the masses' perverse loyalty to a charismatic crook. Well, it was that too. But it wasn't all of it.

You dig deeper into the causes of "Edsa III," you'll find that not all of them have to do with the imagined virtues of Erap. A great deal has to do with the unimagined pangs of hunger of the poor. Every would-be social reformer before martial law liked to say this country was a "social volcano" that was about to explode. The "spectacular divide" between the privileged few and the abject many was roiling its insides like boiling magma. If that was true then, it is even truer now. You do not have to go far to see the spectacular divide between rich and poor, you need only go to any one of the so-called villages of Makati and the rest of Metro Manila.

Erap vowed, like Asiong Salonga, to pry loose the people who were caught in this vise from it. And did not.

Has Ms Macapagal done the opposite of this?

(To be concluded)

Erap film producer opts for drama instead of truth

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

TWO weeks ago, I overheard Msgr. Nico Bautista, who recently rejoined the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board after resigning during the Estrada administration, tell someone that the MTRCB had already approved the showing on TV of Joseph Estrada's film, *"Ama ng Bayan."* Then came the hullabaloo about its TV showing being stopped. Over the weekend I read MTRCB Chair Alejandro Roces denying in his column in the Philippine Star that the film had been "censored." He echoed what Bautista said: that the MTRCB had approved its showing but what was causing the delay was the absence of a special commercial permit from the Videogram Regulatory Board, as required by the law. Roces said that the film's producers failed to register it with the VRB, and as a result, its permit for showing couldn't be given. Roces stressed that "all the producers have to do is to register and acquire the VRB permit" and the film can then be shown.

* * *

I checked this matter out with my brother Danny Olivares of the Philippine Association of Recording Industries, who was with the VRB for a long time. He said Roces is legally correct: if the film for TV and movie is also in videogram form, i.e., VHS, VCD or DVD, it would need a separate review and classification by the VRB, as per PD 1987.

* * *

Now, I know that the Erap film was given by the VRB a "transport clearance" last December, meaning, it could be circulated in VHS form as Erap's gifts, but not for public viewing on TV. In fact, many of us in the media received a copy for Christmas from the former president. Which makes it puzzling that a permit from the VRB was not sought, as Roces pointed out. Unless the producers merely want to create an issue to rile up the people, such as the "banning" of this film.

I understand from VRB officials that they have repeatedly told the producers about the requirements, but they simply refused to comply. *Mukhang naghahanap ng* issue *talaga. Gusto lang i-drama.*

Senators Drilon, Arroyo, Oreta et al., who bewailed its non exhibition and warned that it could be another *"Iginuhit ng Tadhana,"* should have looked into the VRB law first before complaining about "censorship." No one should be above the law.

* * *

A few days ago Sen. Blas Ople congratulated Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo for her quick action in stopping the departure of some Syrians who had maltreated an ABS-CBN team. Filipinos, Ople said, ought not to suffer at the hands of foreigners in their own country.

Perhaps Ople should also look into the case of an Australian national named Ronald Joseph Moy, president of Slimmers World International (SWI), who maltreated Liza Cacanando, wife of former Army Chief Lt. Gen. Manuel Cacanando. Normally I don't touch cases like this, but when Liza showed me the documents, I was appalled. If this could happen to someone like her, I told myself, it can happen to anyone without any clout.

* * *

Cacanando has been a member in good standing of SWI for 18 years. It's there where she worked out several times a week. Last February, on a workout session in SWI on Pasay Road in Makati, she was given by the receptionist the key to locker No. 40 where she deposited her handbag containing some valuables, including a Cartier watch and P1,000 in cash. After her workout, Cacanando found out that her bag was missing, even though the police investigator concluded that the lock had not been forced open. The police learned that the only personnel authorized to have duplicate keys were the public relations officer and the manager. They said that a master key could have been used to open it.

Cacanando's lawyers, Santiago Gabionza and Jessica Lacson, sent a formal demand letter to SWI, but instead of attending to her complaint in accordance with the time-honored tradition that the customer is always right, especially one of such long standing, SWI lawyer Alberto Brobon Reyes insulted her by saying she could have brought "fake items" perhaps from the Greenhills *tiangge*. Cacanando was forced to bring her complaint to the media. And over dzRH, she understandably lost her cool.

Her public complaint, however, angered Moy, who attacked her for using "abusive and foul language toward (SWI) members and staff" and for "spreading malicious rumors against SWI," damaging "the enviable reputation it has painstakingly worked on for the past two decades." Moy also revoked her membership and informed her in writing that "henceforth, you shall be barred from entering the premises of all branches of (SWI)."

What happened to the right of a paying client of good standing to the protection of her valuables while in the premises of the salon?

* * *

Cacanando has also complained that SWI has increased the membership in its branches without upgrading personnel services and facilities, making the premises look like a big marketplace conducive to stealing. She alleged that many customers had lost valuables in SWI premises, but their complaints came to naught. Cacanando wants to know which government agency regulates such outfits as health centers and where citizens can run to for redress of grievances against them.

I think a boycott of SWI is in order because of the arrogance and high-handedness of the manager. Perhaps the Commission on Immigration should look into the possibility of kicking him out. Definitely, Cacanando should pursue her legal case against SWI, if only for the sake of all the customers who have suffered a similar plight.

Why young people kill

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WHEN Robert Steinhaeuser entered the Johann Gutenberg School in Erfurt, Germany, and started blasting away with a revolver, he could not have known that he was setting off a political crisis that may yet determine the outcome of the coming elections.

Politics was farthest from Robert's mind. His motivation seems to be mainly revenge: to get back at the teachers who had given him failing grades and forced him to repeat the senior year of high school, then expelled him for forging absentee excuse notes.

Still, that seems a "flimsy" reason to prowl school corridors and search through classrooms to hunt down teachers and other authority figures. By the time Steinhaeuser was confronted by a history teacher who locked him inside an empty classroom where the youthful gunman then trained his gun on himself, Steinhaeuser had killed 13 teachers, two students and a police officer who had responded to calls for help from other students.

Reports say the shooting has "stunned" the German nation, setting off a national debate on issues ranging from toughening up already tough gun laws, to banning violent video games which Steinhaeuser was reportedly obsessed with.

Why would a young man, who by all accounts was soft-spoken and kept largely to himself, plan and carry out an assault on his school and hunt down teachers for elimination? What caused him to cross the line and bring his dark fantasies to life?

So many possible explanations have been given for the Erfurt shooting, just the latest in a string of school assaults by disgruntled students all over the world. Among them: lax gun laws that make it possible for young people to get their hands on deadly weapons; young people's exposure to and fascination with violence, even if only virtually; and their unmooring from family values and structures that would otherwise moderate their behavior.

* * *

BUT do any of these factors, even taken together, adequately explain why young people from Columbine to Erfurt seem to be upping the ante on violent behavior in school?

A book I've just finished reading offers about as plausible and reasonable an answer as any. "The Tipping Point," by New Yorker staff writer Malcolm Gladwell, examines the phenomenon of behavioral "epidemics" that follow certain rules, not all of which make "sense" and may even run counter to intuition.

In the course of tracing how certain products, trends and behaviors reach the "tipping point" to reach epidemic proportions, Gladwell examined the phenomenon of teenage smoking. More specifically, he sought an explanation for why, despite the vociferous campaigns of the anti-smoking lobby and mounting proof of smoking's dangers, teenagers were smoking in increasing numbers.

Gladwell uses a mysterious "epidemic" of suicides among adolescents in Micronesia to illustrate the mysteries of adolescent imitative behavior.

The series of suicides and suicide attempts in Micronesia, according to researchers, was set off by the death of "R," the charismatic scion of one of the island's wealthiest families, who hanged himself "in romantic despair" after finding himself caught between two girlfriends and unable to choose just one. Hard as it is to believe, this single incident set off a string of "copycat" suicides in the years that followed, leading even much younger boys to "experiment" with what looked like a "glamorous" way to die.

So it is with smoking. Adult warnings and strictures against smoking may in fact only make the act even more tantalizing and glamorous for young people, especially if they find "permission" to smoke from certain compelling and charismatic role models.

* * *

"THE URGE to try something dangerous is pretty nearly universal" among adolescents, says Gladwell. "This is what teens do. This is how they learn about the world, and most of the time...that experimentation doesn't result in anything bad happening. We have to stop fighting this kind of experimentation. We have to accept it and even to embrace it...(but) making sure that experimentation doesn't have serious consequences."

Unlike smoking, which is an "epidemic in reaction" to adult behavior and prohibition, the teenage suicides in Micronesia were an "epidemic in isolation," following the internal rules of their culture and unexplainable to adult standards. So, too, says Gladwell, is the string of school assaults by teenage gunmen.

"It is a mistake to try to make sense of these kinds of actions by blaming influences of the outside world—in terms of broader trends of violence and social breakdown. These are epidemics in isolation: they follow a mysterious, internal script that makes sense only in the closed world that teenagers inhabit."

Gladwell notes that "the post-Columbine outbreak of school shootings is...happening because Columbine happened, and because ritualized, dramatic, self-destructive behavior among teenagers—whether it involves suicide, smoking, taking a gun to school, or fainting after drinking a harmless can of Coke—has extraordinary contagious power."

Gladwell said he expected such violent behavior to increase, largely because teenagers are becoming increasingly "isolated," with more time to spend among themselves and opportunities to "tune out" the voices of adults. And as a consequence, to envelop themselves in a world "ruled by the logic of word of mouth, by the contagious messages that teens pass among themselves." Ominously, Gladwell concludes: "Columbine is now the most prominent epidemic of isolation among teenagers. It will not be the last."

A history of time and then some

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

(Continued from Saturday)

1755: Samuel Johnson issues the first English Dictionary, at last providing young children with a book they can look up dirty words in.

1758: New Jersey is chosen as the site of America's first Indian reservation, which should give Indians an idea of the kind of shabby living conditions they can expect from here on out.

1763: The French and Indian War ends. The French and Indians both lost.

1770: The shooting of three people in the Boston Massacre touches off the Revolution. Two hundred years later, three shootings in Boston will be considered just about average for a Saturday night.

1773: Colonists dump tea into Boston Harbor. The British call the act "barbaric," noting that no one added cream.

1776: Napoleon decides to maintain a position of neutrality in the American Revolution, primarily because he is only seven years old.

1779: John Paul Jones notifies the British, "I have not yet begun to fight!" and then feels pretty foolish when he discovers that his ship is sinking.

1793: "Let them eat cake!" becomes the most famous thing Marie Antoinette ever said. Also, the least diplomatic thing she ever said. Also, the last thing she ever said. (Again my niece comments: "I have it from a good authority that what she said was, 'Let them eat brioche!'" On the other hand, I understand that she made neither of these statements.)

1799: Translation of the Rosetta Stone finally enables scholars to learn that Egyptian hieroglyphics don't say anything important: "Dear Ramses, How are you? I am fine."

1805: Robert Fulton invents the torpedo.

1807: Robert Fulton invents the steamship so he has something to blow up with his torpedo.

1815: Post office policy is established as Andrew Jackson wins the Battle of New Orleans a month after he should have received the letter telling him the War of 1812 is over.

1840: William Henry Harrison is elected president in a landslide, proving that the campaign motto, "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" is so meaningless that very few can disagree with it.

1850: Henry Clay announces, "I'd rather be right than president," which gets quite a laugh, coming from a guy who has run for president five times without winning.

1859: Charles Darwin writes "Origin of the Species." It has the same general plot as "Planet of the Apes," but fails to gross as much money.

1865: Union soldiers face their greatest challenge of the war: getting General Grant sober enough to accept Lee's surrender.

1877:"Where did all those @#$%ing Indians come from?"—Custer

1894: Thomas Edison displays the first motion picture, and everybody likes it except the movie critics.

1903: The opening of the Trans-Siberian Railway enables passengers from Moscow to reach Vladivostok in eight days, which is a lot sooner than most of them want to get there.

1910: The founding of the Boy Scouts of America comes as bad news to old ladies who would rather cross the street by themselves.

1911: Roald Amundsen discovers the South Pole and confirms what he's suspected all along: It looks a helluva lot like the North Pole!

1912: People with reservations for the voyage of the Titanic get their money back.

1920: The 18th Amendment to the Constitution makes drinking illegal in the United States, so everyone stops. Except for the 40 million who don't stop!

1924: Hitler is released from prison four years early, after convincing the parole board that he is a changed man who won't cause any more trouble.

1928: Herbert Hoover promises "a chicken in every pot and a car in every garage," but he neglects to add that most Americans will soon be without pots and garages.

1930: Pluto is discovered. Not the dog, stupid; the planet. The dog wasn't discovered until 1938.

1933: German housewives begin to realize why that crazy wallpaper hanger with the mustache never came back to finish his work.

1933: Hitler establishes the Third Reich, and announces that it will last for a thousand years. As matters develop, he is only 988 years off.

1934: John Dillinger is gunned down by police as he leaves a Chicago movie theater. And just to make the evening a complete washout, he didn't enjoy the movie, either.

1934: As if the Great Depression weren't giving businessmen enough headaches, Ralph Nader is born.

1938: Great Britain and Germany sign a peace treaty, thereby averting all possibility of World War II.

1944: Hitler's promise of Volkswagens for all Germans as soon as they've won the war doesn't prove to be as strong an incentive as he had hoped.

1945: "What the @#$% was that?"—Mayor of Hiroshima.

1997: "Aw c'mon. Who the @#$% is going to find out?"—Bill Clinton.

2030: Over the past few years, more money has been spent on breast implants and Viagra than is spent on Alzheimer's disease research. It is believed that by the year 2030 there will be a large number of people wandering around with huge breasts and erections who can't remember what to do with them.

Miseducation

YOUNGBLOOD

Bernadette R. Jarapa

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.***

SHE was 7 and was feeling bored inside her classroom. She wasn't listening. Her teacher approached and pointed her two fingers at her eyes and snarled, *"Tutusukin ko ang mata mo dyan!"*

It was the last class before the Christmas break, and they were having their Christmas party. He went back to the table to get another piece of cake and found there was nothing left. Now, where was that chocolate cake he brought as his contribution? Then he wondered why his teacher told them not to eat lechon. Looking out of the window, he saw his teacher loading plastic bags into her car.

I had long lost my respect for teachers even before I got out of elementary school. That time, you could attribute it to immaturity. But now I still feel the same way and I'm a senior in college. Immaturity for more than nine years? Nah, this is reality.

Let me begin with my brother's story. My brother had asthma when he was young and was allergic to dust—to chalk especially. One day in class, he was having an asthma attack, (hence his discomfort) when his teacher called him. He couldn't answer right away, of course, for who cares about the pelvic fins when you're having an attack and cannot breathe? The teacher got mad, lifted him by the shoulders and slammed him down on a chair.

My brother was in the hospital for two weeks. But the teacher denied having anything to do with his condition, and the school administration believed her stupid story that my brother ate a piece of chalk. I suppose it was also the chalk that slammed him down on his chair.

Two years ago, a "concerned" teacher called my mother to inform her that my other brother was cutting classes. Mom asked if she was sure. The teacher assured her, saying: *"Oho, nandito nga sa harap ko si* Stanley, *at kitang kita kong kasama ng mga kaibigan nya."*

Mom casually told her not to worry. My brother was then resting in bed. He had not gone to school for three days in a row because he was down with the flu.

It turned his teacher wanted to solicit donations for the coming intramurals.

Part of the training for juniors in one of our college departments is done in the United States. Every year this teacher.gets a free plane ticket to go with her students. Why doesn't she just give the free seat to a deserving student who cannot afford the fare? To think she isn't even required to be there.

When I was a college freshman, our English teacher asked us to submit an index card with our home addresses and contact numbers. I didn't trust him, so I gave him the wrong data, thinking that if he must get in touch with me for academic purposes, the school could give him the information he wanted. It turned out that my hunch was right: Some of my female classmates complained that he had called to tell them he wanted to know them better.

I know there are many educators in our school who can honestly say, "I don't mind the pay so long as I can help shape the nation's future." But I suspect that a few deserve to be put in the Hall of Shame and others simply have no choice except to grow roots in the academe.

During the last semester I fought with the school administration when it refused to conduct an investigation of the loss of some equipment belonging to the school. They wanted me to pay *"kasi mura lang naman."* And to think those items were found lost, a whole year after my term as the editor of the school paper.

Here is a school that is always ready to march in the streets in defense of freedom or to fight for justice, but its administrators cannot see where justice is in a matter as simple as this. I have seen their brand of justice, and it cost me plenty.

It is said that the school is our second home and our teachers our second parents. But what if you can't trust them to direct you to the correct path? What if you are afraid to do your best lest they hate you for it? And what if you can't tell if he's shaking your hand because he's a friend or he just wants to touch you?

Last year I was leafing through a newspaper when I happened to see the list of the teachers who had passed the board exam. The list was published in the obituary section.

God help us all.

Bernadette R. Jarapa, 20, studies in an exclusive school for girls.

THEY SAID

Hungry students

"Not only once did I see a student fainting in the classroom because of hunger."

—Rosario Pimentel, president of Bulacan State University

Iron law

"We regret that move...but we cannot by executive fiat repeal the law of supply and demand."

—Press Secretary Rigoberto Tiglao, on the fuel price increase

Jews' only homeland

"The Jewish people have a small country. This is the only place in the world where the Jewish people have the right to defend themselves, by themselves, and we must preserve that right."

—Prime Minister Ariel Sharon

Mountain of life

"Whether the legends and myths of Mt. Banahaw are true or not, the fact is the mountain has life—and life is sacred."

—Eco-activist and actress Chin-Chin Gutierrez

To die or to go home

"Our options are to die or return safely to our homes."

—Palestinian policeman Mazan Hussein, while holed up in the Church of Nativity

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Casino Filipino
LETTERS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Brainchild of people with small minds

THOSE who corrupt the public mind are just as evil as those who steal from the public purse. The very existence of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. is already a corruption of the public mind and its new plan to put up a casino university is an evil and damnable notion which seeks to steal what little decency and morality is still left in the Filipino.

It was the issue of gambling which brought down Joseph Estrada. Should this sinister proposal be adopted, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will most certainly be riding the slow paper boat to her own sunset.

In what amounts to moral decadence of unfathomable depths, Pagcor people are even now busy working for the inclusion of the subject of casino operation and management in the curricula of colleges and universities which offer courses in hotel and restaurant management. What breath-taking brazenness! What overflowing gall! This proposal could only have been hatched in the dank darkness of a snake pit. It is the brainchild of people with small minds and even smaller hearts.

All good men must rise up and rage, rage against the dying of the light of sanity in this dice-crazy country of ours. We must resist this evil at all costs before we find ourselves one day already a nation of trained and skilled croupiers and card dealers, college-educated and professional pimps and whores.

Gambling offers but two choices: lose your money or lose your character. Either way you lose. The best throw of the dice, as always, is to throw them away.

—ANTONIO CALIPJO GO,
Marian School of Quezon City,
199 Sauyo Road, Novaliches,
Quezon City

Was money made by delaying teachers' benefits?

WE would like to thank the INQUIRER for publishing our letter last April 8, 2002 on the delay in the release of our clothing allowance and productivity pay amounting to P58.78 million. Its publication has prompted the DepEd offices of Secretary Raul S. Roco and Undersecretary Ernesto Pangan to call the attention of our division superintendent, Aquilina S. Rivas, to this matter and she was ordered to release the clothing allowance on or before April 12, 2002.

The teachers sent a mass delegation to the office of Rivas the day after our letter come out. She did not face us but instead her administrative officer and chief accountant furnished us a copy of the memorandum dated April 5 ordering them "to submit the payroll for the said allowances." That only served to identify the source of the delay. Superintendents of other divisions were instructed to submit the payroll a week before the semester ended. Other teachers received their allowances before the summer vacation began.

It is clear to us why our allowances were delayed. Based on the records of DepEd-NCR, the funds for the Quezon City public school teachers were released as early as March 22, 2002. While teachers from other divisions received their allowances before the Holy Week, this was possible because the Department of Education had earlier released an advisory that these benefits would be released then. The superintendents from other divisions gave clear instructions to all schools under them to submit the payroll, one week before the semester ended. In the case of Quezon City, it was the other way around. They waited for two weeks after they received their budget allocation and after the teachers had already gone for the summer vacation before issuing any memo.

Out of curiosity, we inquired from a Land Bank branch official how much in interest would P58.78 million earn if it were deposited for 30 days. We were told it would reach P464,000.

Meanwhile, the release of our P2,000 productivity pay is still pending. Our school officials have been insisting that the performance rating for the current school year be submitted before it is released. This is contrary to the provision of DECS Order No. 33, s. 1999; which says that only the performance ratings for the two semesters immediately preceding the year in which the incentive pay is granted are required.

We have learned a very valuable lesson from this experience: We must be vigilant, militant and united in action in order to safeguard our rights and economic well being.

—FRANCE C. CASTRO,
president, Quezon City Public
School Teachers Association
Inc., c/o Quirino High School
Faculty and Employees
Association, Project 3,
Quezon City

Whatever happened to new politics?

THE LAST couple of months have seen a lot of news and columns about the controversy between Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, whose confirmation is being deliberated upon by the Commission on Appointments, and former Environment Management Bureau (EMB) director Peter Abaya.

The main conflict revolves around Alvarez's effort to block the appointment of Abaya as assistant secretary, and the refusal of the secretary to drop the administrative charge lodged against the former EMB director for violation of DENR Administrative Order 2000-18, known as the Chemical Control Order (CCO) for Ozone-Depleting Substances (ODS), pursuant to the provisions of RA 6969 (Toxic Substances, Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act of 1990) and Philippine Senate Resolution No. 25 of 1993, ratifying the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. In 2000, Abaya had furtively inserted what is now known as "Footnote 3" into the CCO, allowing a 75 percent increase in importation of ODS over the 1996 baseline data equivalent to an amount of 1,330.43 metric tons of ODS over and above the year 2000 target.

Abaya's alibis that Alvarez miscomputed the ODS consumption data and that Footnote 3 was intended to legalize rampant smuggling of ODS are neither relevant nor germane to the issue. That the congressman-father of Abaya has taken the case to his Southern Tagalog colleagues in the House is most certainly uncalled for and unacceptable. How can an executive of government exact discipline from his personnel? And where does that place good governance?

The case should clearly be taken to the Ombudsman and not the Commission on Appointments. It is obvious that the legislators have signaled, that for Alvarez to be confirmed he must be willing to hammer out a deal instead of filing charges against erring officers.

There are other issues that seem to add to the fire instead of mitigating the heat. There is Alvarez's cancellation of the environment compliance certificate obtained from Abaya and former Secretary Antonio Cerilles by the Canadian firm Placer Dome in January 2001, just as the Estrada administration was tottering. Why must the move of the secretary which would promote the welfare of the people and benefit the environment be taken against him? He was doing his sworn duty and mandate to see to it that the rules are followed to protect and preserve the environment.

Another issue that some of his foes are trying to foist on Alvarez is the immediate resolution of the 18-year-old Diwalwal problem. It must be pointed out that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is now addressing the Diwalwal problem on four fronts (environment, social, legal and rationalization plan), so any group or individual attempting to use this issue against the secretary's confirmation has to find another real reason for seeking the rejection of his confirmation.

We are bothered by the "win-win solution" proposed by the irrepressible Speaker Jose de Venecia. This calls for Alvarez to drop his opposition to the appointment of Abaya as assistant secretary and then the latter's father will ask his friends in the CA to withdraw their objections to Alvarez's confirmation. There is no other way to call it but pure and simple political horse-trading! Where are our principles of good governance, fair play, recognition and respect for competence and integrity, and our sense of justice? There are time-honored traditions and rules that honorable men and women follow in choosing their leaders and officials. When we succumb to the pressure and blackmail of traditional politicians, we betray the public trust and we abdicate our obligation to serve the people to the best of our ability and with the noblest of intentions. When this happens, we should ask: Whatever happened to the new politics that this administration promised to practice?

—ILEANA R.F. CRUZ, executive director, Konsyensyang
Pilipino, 265-C Katipunan
Avenue, Loyola Heights,
Quezon City

Another victory for rape victims

WE are very pleased with the present developments in our justice system, which indicate clearly the commitment of the judiciary to address gender issues confronting our Filipino women. After the recent favorable ruling of the Supreme Court on the criminal aspect of sexual harassment now comes the first marital rape conviction.

As the major national advocate for the advancement of women, we commend Judge Anthony Santos of the Cagayan de Oro City Regional Trial Court (Branch 19) for his resolute interpretation of RA 8353 or the Anti-Rape Law of 1997. This landmark law not only transformed rape into a crime against persons from a crime against chastity, but also uses a broader and more gender-sensitive definition of rape. RA 8353 does not discriminate in regard to the perpetrator of rape, recognizing that it happens even in marriage.

Even with the growing number of women reporting rape in recent years, marital rape is still considered as one of the silent violence against women (VAW). The apprehensions of women victims is aggravated in marital rape. They are more unwilling to report the crime because of shame, protection of family reputation, and the notion that it is part of their husbands' so called marital rights. For this reason, we salute the woman survivor for taking a brave stride not only for herself but for other women.

We do not have data on the number of marital rape cases filed in courts, much less its rate of incidence. All we know now is that, for the first time, a lower court convicted a husband for raping his wife. We trust that more judges will become as fair and responsive to the plight of women.

—AURORA JAVATE DE DIOS,
chair, National Commission on
the Role of Filipino Women,
1145 J.P. Laurel St., San
Miguel, Manila

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First the evidence, then the reply

WE write for our client, Marybeth Lopez De Leon, in response to certain misimpressions made in Rina Jimenez-David's column last April 20.

David considered it "uncanny" that we, De Leon's counsel, "seem to enjoy the right to choose the law enforcement agency to conduct the investigation." We wish to clarify that when we reported the shooting incident to the PNP-CIDG on April 12, 2002, we did so on account of our lack of exact knowledge as to where the alleged shooting incident took place. In any event, it was our understanding that our report to the PNP-CIDG sufficed for the latter to refer the matter to, and coordinate with, the proper investigating unit. We regret that insinuations of impropriety had to be made.

The reason our client has not submitted any statement to date is that the preliminary investigation has yet to be held on May 3, 2002. As counsel, we advised her to file her statement only after we have received all evidence against her.

There should be no surprise as to why the police have not arrested our client. This is because they are not authorized to issue warrants of arrest.

As for the statement that "two witnesses have positively identified the suspect," it should be noted that both witnesses do not claim to have seen the alleged actual shooting.

Our client is innocent of the crime charged. She will defend herself to prove her innocence.

It is our hope that the media and the public will refrain from being misled by speculation, and respect our client's constitutional and legal rights, particularly the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty, to which—like any other person, rich or poor—she is entitled.

—ALEXANDER J. POBLADOR,
JAIME G. HOFILEÑA,
POBLADOR BAUTISTA
& REYES Law Offices,
5th Flr., Sedeco I Bldg.,
120 Rada cor. Legaspi Sts.,
Makati City

CSSP Class of 2002

NOTWITHSTANDING Ateneo, Harvard and Wharton, Trade Secretary Mar Roxas had never attended UP so we decided to award him with the university's *sablay* as a token of appreciation for being our guest speaker this year.

He was speaking at the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy's recognition rites. These are more intimate and personal affairs organized to complement the university-wide graduation ceremonies.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

A *sablay*? That's a green and maroon sash draped over the chest, with "UP" emblazoned in Roman and old "Filipino" scripts. Living up to our reputation of non-conformity, UP dispensed with the toga requirement a few years ago. Being UP though, we didn't ban the toga so students and faculty have choices: a toga or Filipiniana, or a combination of both, as long as they use UP's *sablay*.

It was a good move, allowing for endless variations on what people can wear, which is what I'm going to describe in a while. Just as interesting as the graduation attire were the ways people marched in.

I use the word "march" figuratively. The closest thing we got to that were the more militant graduates, who sort of marched up to the stage and would raise a clenched fist. Others strutted, sashayed, glided, waltzed in. Some reminded me of horses, starting with a slow trot, breaking out into a slow canter and then excitedly prancing on to the stage leaving their parents behind. Still others, I suspect the ones who'd been in UP a bit too long, sort of skipped in, almost ready to break into a jig.

Others tried to be solemn, pacing their steps to "Pomp and Circumstance" (which, after an hour of repetition, began to drive some of us mad). The women, they were something else. I realized our UP coeds have become so used to jeans and sneakers that it was a major feat for them to walk in a dress and heels, each step as precarious as that of a toddler learning to walk.

Next year we really should get one of our graduates, Donita, to coach them. Occasionally known as Arsem Don Tenorio, Donita was our second open transgender to graduate, perfectly poised in a gown she got from Baguio's *ukay-ukay*. Donita finished cum laude in linguistics and has received a scholarship to do further studies in Japan.

Now to the *sablay*. I can't think of a more appropriate symbol of UP, the sash being as unwieldly as the UP student. As soon as you drape it over your shoulder, it begins to squirm, struggling to escape. Roxas' *sablay* began to rebel the moment he got it and finally made its way to the floor. Roxas gamely pulled it back up, like one would with a pair of drawers. An amused audience applauded as one faculty member quickly came to the rescue with a safety pin.

There were no rules, of course, for parents, and they contributed their share to the variations on garb and gait. Faculty members on stage gasped when we thought Elvis had come back, complete with sunglasses. My seatmate whispered a Cebuano expression, "*sputing*," which I can't quite translate, being a combination of "*jeproks*" and "deadly." Women had the advantage on what they could wear, some mothers ending up looking like their daughters' younger sisters.

But the show was still the graduates'. Most heavily applauded was Paul David Jonas, who graduated cum laude from philosophy and slowly made his way through the stage in crutches. I couldn't get information on why he uses crutches, but Paul David started college already differently abled, so for him to finish was quite an achievement, given that UP isn't barrier-free yet. David is now applying for graduate school.

Graduate students—now that's another lot. I know many of them have had to balance careers, family life and graduate work. Allan Alvarez was one of my best undergraduate students and put himself through graduate school while teaching. Here he was now, about to get his MA in philosophy, accompanied by his wife and child.

Bernadette Abrera got her doctorate in sociology with a dissertation on the *bangka's* symbolism. She went up the stage with her children and best friend Jess Abrera—yes, the INQUIRER's Tito Jess. (Do we get a Pinoy Nga cartoon, Jess, to show that graduation?)

The last one to go up the stage was Marison Dy, who finished her doctorate in psychology. A little woman with a confident stride, Marison was accompanied by her husband, very young children, and I think her mother. I thought to myself she should get a medal for finishing the doctorate while raising a family. As she and her family turned toward the audience to pose for a photograph, one of her children began jumping up and down on the stage, much to the delight of the audience, who I think wanted so badly to do the same thing.

After the rituals, I stayed on to stroll a bit and to catch the sunset. Bathed in a warm orange glow, the campus continued to throb with life as proud families, nay, clans, stayed on. Their *sablay* now retired, gowns and *barongs* somewhat disheveled, everyone was obviously exhausted, but you could still feel the lingering joy and, I sensed, an anticipation of more exciting times ahead.

And people ask why we stay on to teach.

Smooth House hearing in Boracay

ON APRIL 18, 2002, I was one of the privileged few who attended the congressional inquiry held in Boracay on the problems of the Aklan Electric Cooperative (Akelco). The panel was composed of members of the House committees on energy and good governance.

I was impressed! The panel members obviously did their homework. Their questions were incisive and direct to the point. There were no theatrics. The proceedings were carried out in logical sequence and no stone was left unturned. Most important, the hearing yielded concrete results that will go a long way in solving the problems that have festered for many years. In short, it was nothing like what the media have carped about Congress being one big circus.

Perhaps there should be more of these out-of town-hearings—say, one on the Commission on Elections' intramurals, another on the Philippine Stock Exchange squabble?

—PERLA MANAPOL,
6070 Palma St., Barangay
Poblacion,
Makati City

Manila to host World Press Freedom Day on May 3

THE 2002 World Press Freedom Day celebration will be held in Manila on Saturday, according Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr.

Guingona, who also chairs the Unesco National Commission of the Philippines (Unacom), said the Philippines was chosen by Unesco as the venue for this year's celebration in recognition of its having one of the freest and most vibrant press in the Asia-Pacific Region.

The Philippine press is also recognized for the significant contributions it has made in the restoration of freedom and democracy in the country. This is the first time that the annual event will be held in the region.

A ceremony marking the event will be held at Malacañang Palace attended by President Macapagal-Arroyo and Unesco Director General Koichiro Matsuura, who will be making a four-day visit starting Friday.

The Unesco Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize will be conferred on Geoffrey Nyarota, editor in chief of Zimbabwe's only independent newspaper, the Daily News. The prize, created in 1997 aims to honor the work of an individual, organization or institution defending or promoting freedom of expression anywhere in the world.

Terrorism and media

Preceding the Malacañang ceremony is a two-day international conference on the theme of this year's celebration, Terrorism and Media. The forum will provide a venue to discuss issues such as the role of media, the need for guidelines on media coverage, media ethics and professionalism, and the safety of journalists. Some 50 foreign journalists and 70 Filipino mediamen are expected to participate in the two-day conference to be held on Friday at the Westin Philippine Plaza.

Unesco also announced that World Press Freedom Day events will also be held in various countries and regions of the world, particularly those facing conflicts and threats of terrorism.

Unesco National Commission is spearheading the preparation for this year's celebration with Vice President Guingona as overall chair, Unacom vice chair Lisa Macuja-Elizalde, co-chair, Preciosa S. Soliven, Unacom secretary general and Dr. Florangel Rosario-Braid of the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication as vice chairpersons.

During his visit, Director General Matsuura is also expected to discuss global issues such as ongoing reforms at Unesco, outcome of the 2001 Unesco General Conference; Unesco resolutions on Cultural Diversity and Underwater Cultural Heritage; education policy; international terrorism; and of course the World Press Freedom Day.

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

No blueprint for Iraq attack, US says

CRAWFORD, Texas—US President George W. Bush has no military blueprint on his desk for toppling Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, but the ouster of America's Gulf War nemesis is a top policy goal, the White House said on Sunday.

As Saddam wound up a five-day celebration of his 65th birthday with massive parades designed to show his popular support at home, US officials made it clear they hoped his days at Iraq's helm were numbered.

White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer said the Pentagon had "multiple contingency plans" for dealing with Iraq but that Bush had made no decisions on what course of action to take.

"He has no plan on his desk," Fleischer said.

To the consternation of some European allies, Bush has made no secret of the fact that he intends to move against Saddam at some point, publicly branding Iraq part of "an axis of evil," together with North Korea and Iran, countries he says could form a deadly alliance with terrorists by sharing weapons of mass destruction.

The explosion of Israeli-Palestinian violence has complicated efforts to win Arab support for any action, although Bush has tied Iraq to events in the Middle East, charging that Saddam encouraged suicide bombings in Israel by making payments to the families of Palestinian "martyrs."

A senior Saudi official who took part in talks between Bush and Saudi leader Crown Prince Abdullah at the US president's ranch near Crawford last week, said on Sunday military action against Iraq was unnecessary because Baghdad was "talking now" with the United Nations on re-admitting weapons inspectors.

"These are the objectives that the United States has and, if Iraq is willing to do them, we must give them the benefit of the doubt and we'll see whether they implement what they have promised," Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal told reporters in Texas. "Therefore, we see no need for any military or other action."

Renewed speculation about Saddam's future was fueled by a New York Times report on Sunday that the Bush administration was weighing a potential major air campaign and ground invasion—involving the use of 70,000 to 250,000 troops—early next year to topple his government. ***Reuters***

AN IRAQI man swings a sword during celebrations of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's birthday celebrations in Tikrit, north of Baghdad, April 28. Hundreds of thousands Iraqis came out on the streets throughout the country today to celebrate the President's 65th birthday. REUTERS

Iraq says it is ready to defend self

BAGHDAD—Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz said on Monday Iraq was ready to defend itself against any US attack on the country.

"It seems they (US) want to resume their wide aggression against Iraq and commit another crime as the (one) they committed in 1991," Aziz told reporters in Baghdad.

"The Iraqi people and Iraqi leadership are prepared to defend themselves," he said during a tour of a Baghdad shelter bombed during the 1991 US-led war that ended Iraq's seven-month occupation of Kuwait.

The New York Times reported on Sunday that Washington was contemplating a major air campaign and ground invasion early next year to topple the government of President Saddam Hussein.

The White House said President George W. Bush has no military blueprint on his desk for toppling Saddam, but that the ouster of America's Gulf War nemesis is a top policy goal.

White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer said the Pentagon had "multiple contingency plans" for dealing with Iraq but that Bush had made no decisions on what course of action to take.

Bush has made no secret of the fact that he intends to move against Saddam at some point, publicly branding Iraq part of "an axis of evil," together with North Korea and Iran, countries he says could form a deadly alliance with terrorists by sharing weapons of mass destruction.

Iraq says it has no weapons of mass destruction.

Iraqi authorities brought five days of celebrations for Saddam's birthday to a climax on Sunday with massive parades designed to show his popular support. ***Reuters***

Opposition bets defeat Koizumi party rivals

TOKYO—Opposition-backed candidates defeated rivals from Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's ruling party in two of three major elections Sunday, reflecting the Japanese leader's plummeting popularity and weakening grip on power.

The races will not alter the balance of power in Parliament, as the ruling coalition, led by Koizumi's Liberal Democratic Party, retains its majority in both houses.

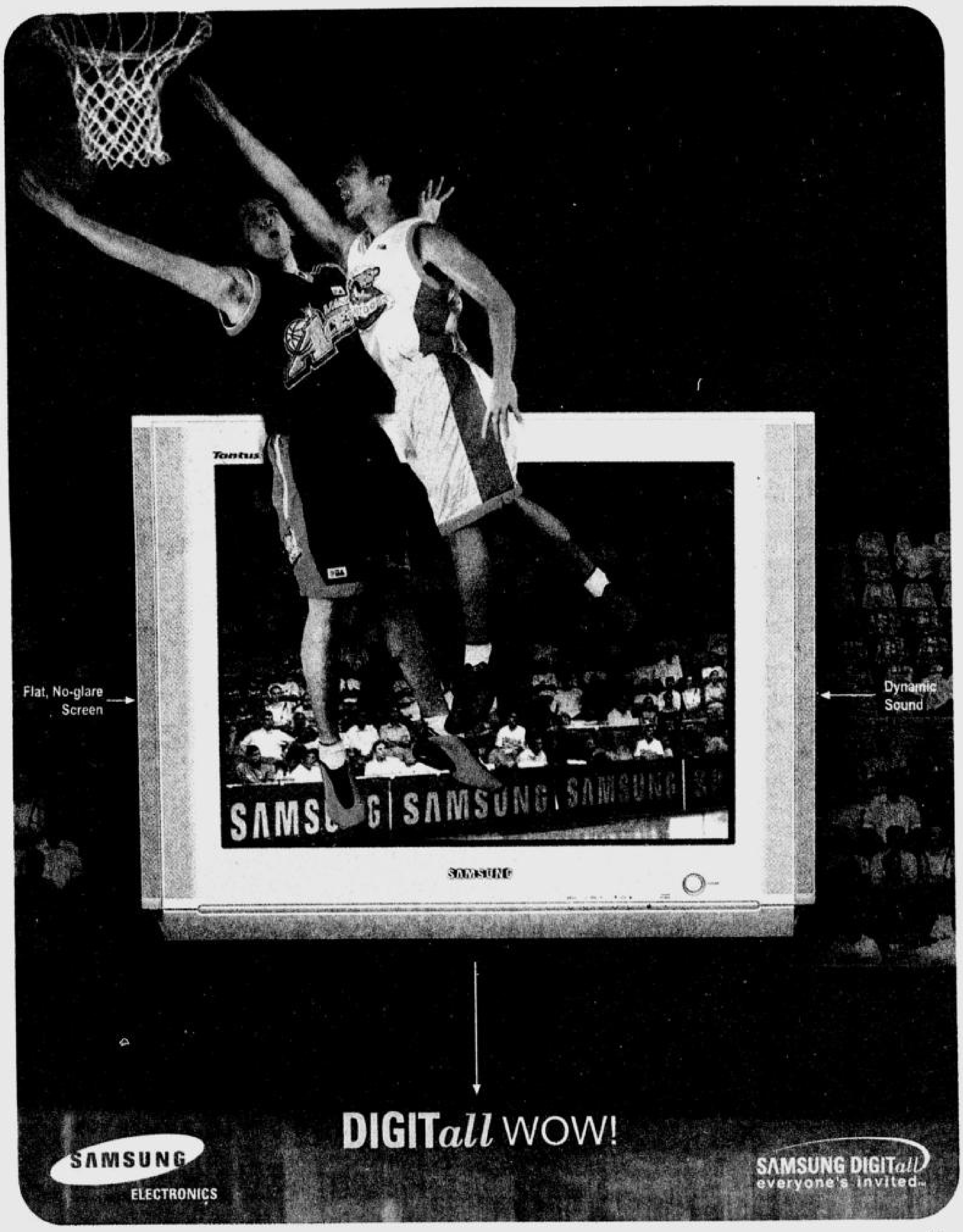
But the losses were another blow to the Japanese leader, who has been trying to shore up dwindling public support, accelerate stagnating reforms and resuscitate a party mired in scandal.

"The results should be taken as a very strong, harsh criticism of the Koizumi Cabinet," said Yukio Hatoyama, leader of the largest opposition Democratic Party of Japan, after official results were announced. "Although Koizumi's Cabinet has talked about structural reforms, we still have yet to see any real reforms."

At stake Sunday were an upper house seat from the northern prefecture (state) of Niigata, a lower house seat from western Wakayama prefecture, and the governor's office in western Tokushima prefecture.

The Parliamentary races were by-elections to fill seats vacated by the deaths of two LDP lawmakers. The Tokushima election chose a successor for disgraced former Gov. Toshio Endo, who was arrested last month on bribery charges.

In the vote for the Niigata upper house seat, independent Takahiro Kuroiwa defeated runner-up Ichiro Tsukada from the LDP 541,881 votes to 342,207, local election official Hiroaki Sekimoto said. Kuroiwa, 35, who heads a local welfare organization, ran with the informal backing of the opposition Democratic Party, Social Democratic Party and Liberal Party. ***AP***



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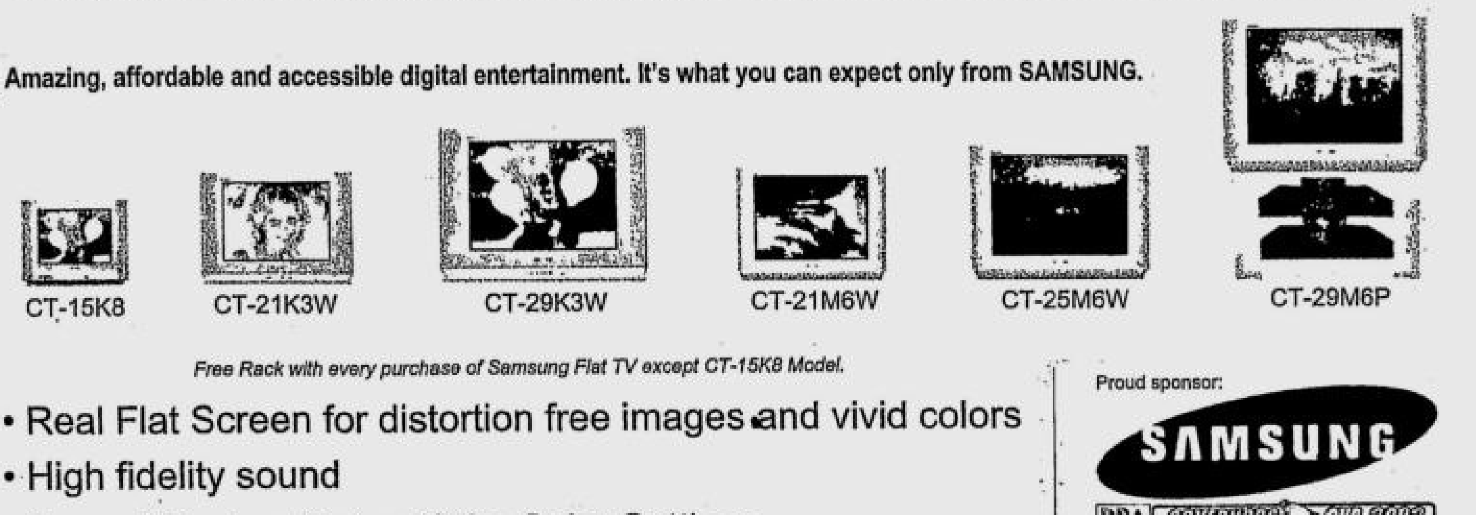

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Prue Kyme-Hobson waves her bra at a passing truck before she makes another donation to what's become known as the "Bra Fence" in the Cadrona valley located 60 km north-east of Queenstown April 28. The fence includes donations from numerous passersby and follows the same theme as a nearby fence that hangs old shoes.

CONTROVERSIAL 'BIOBANK'

World's biggest gene bank launched in UK

LONDON—The world's biggest genetic database, built on DNA samples from 500,000 Britons, was given the go-ahead on Monday with a pledge of $65.35 million in initial funding from the project's backers.

The controversial "biobank" scheme will give scientists a unique opportunity to examine genetic and lifestyle factors that underpin many common diseases including cancer, diabetes, heart disease, asthma and Alzheimer's.

Funding is being provided by the British government and the Wellcome Trust, the world's largest medical research charity, which first suggested the scheme three years ago.

Progress on the project has been slow since then, as scientists have tackled ethical concerns about collecting and collating data, amid criticism from groups such as Genewatch UK who fear the commercialization of genetic information.

Central to the debate are worries over patient confidentiality and what access pharmaceutical companies should have to the database.

DNA samples will be taken from volunteers of both sexes, aged 45 to 69, at a small number of regional centers and the anonymous information will be held in public ownership.

No one organization or commercial company will have exclusive access to the data, although pharmaceutical companies will be able to use the results of the study to help design new drugs or diagnostic tests.

The first fruits of the project are likely to be seen in a field known as pharmacogenomics, or understanding why people react differently to the same medicines.

The mapping of the human genome in 2000 opened the door to understanding the root causes of many diseases. But unpicking the interaction of genes and environmental factors which determine why we succumb to certain diseases is hugely complex.

The end result should be the development of personalized medicine, where drug regimes are tailored to individual needs.

"In 20 years time, we may see individualized approaches to disease prevention and treatment," said Professor Sir George Radda, chief executive of Britain's state-funded Medical Research Council, one of the project's backers.

"Once we understand the genetic bases of various diseases and the genetic differences between individuals that may affect their responses, it may become possible for a GP to prescribe drugs or other treatments designed specifically for people's own genetic makeup."

The British project—which is expected to begin assessing samples and records within the next two or three years—is not the first genetic database.

But it will be the largest and the most ethnically diverse, with twice the number of DNA samples as one in Iceland, where a commercial biotech firm, deCODE genetics, has struck a controversial deal to gain access to 270,000 medical records.

Waves of immigration from the Celts and Saxons to Africans and Indians make Britain an ideal "laboratory" for studying genetic influences in a population group that is largely typical of the wider world.

Five decades of National Health Service records also mean there are well-documented medical histories to marry against the genetic and lifestyle data. *Reuters*

European court rejects paralyzed woman's appeal for euthanasia

STRASBOURG—The European Court of Human Rights on Monday rejected an appeal from a terminally ill and paralysed British woman seeking the right to commit suicide with the aid of her husband.

Tackling the emotive issue of euthanasia for the first time, the court decided unanimously that Britain's refusal to allow her assisted suicide did not violate any of the terms of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Diane Pretty, 43, is paralyzed from the neck down from motor neuron disease and is fed by tube. She communicates through a computer because she cannot speak.

Pretty launched her legal action last year, arguing that her imminent natural death will be "exceedingly distressing and undignified." Because of her paralysis, she cannot take her life alone.

"We are obviously disappointed that Diane has lost her case, both for her and for other people in the same position," said Pretty's lawyer, Mona Arshi from the civil rights group Liberty.

"We really believe the court had an opportunity to remedy a defect in current law which placed Diane and people like her in a tragic trap."

Pretty left her home in Luton, north of London, shortly after the ruling en route for London where she was to give a press conference at 1:00 p.m.

"Diane's health is not as good as it was when were in Strasbourg. That may be because of all that's happening," her husband Brian said as she was wheeled to a waiting ambulance.

"I don't want to say too much at the moment. I have got a lot of things on my mind. I just want to concentrate on getting Diane down to London," he added.

The House of Lords, the highest court in Britain, decided in a final ruling last November that Pretty's husband would be guilty of a crime and would face up to 14 years in jail if he helped her die.

Pretty then took the case to Strasbourg, accusing Britain of violating articles in the European Convention on Human Rights on the right to life, and arguing the right to die with dignity with the help of her husband was related to the right to live.

In her submission, Pretty cited five provisions of the European Convention: Article Two on the right to life, Article Three on the prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment, Article Eight on the right to respect for private life, Article Nine on freedom of conscience and Article 14 on the prohibition of discrimination.

But in their ruling, the European Court's panel of seven judges rejected outright all of her complaints.

Crucially, "the Court did not consider that the blanket nature of the ban on assisted suicide was disproportionate."

Suicide was decriminalized in Britain in 1961, while assisted suicide is illegal in Britain as well as in several other signatory-countries to the European Convention, including Austria, Italy, Norway and Spain.

When the case went to the European Court in March, lawyers for the British government had painted a stark picture if a legal precedent was set.

"Assisted suicide should remain a crime," Jonathan Crow said, arguing that if the law were changed, a hospital trying to save the life of a would-be suicide victim could be charged with a crime. *AFP*

'SAX' PLAYER

Aboriginal performer Les Saxby plays a traditional aboriginal musical instrument known as a "*didgeridoo*" on the shores of Sydney's Botany Bay April 29 during the Meeting of Two Cultures ceremony. The annual ceremony celebrates at the exact spot where 232 years ago, the famous British explorer James Cook landed upon Australia. It is attended by local community groups as part of the ongoing reconciliation process with the local indigenous cultures.

REUTERS

$4-M TAPESTRY

REUTERS

Anthony Lin, chairperson of Christie's Asia auction house, speaks beside an exceptionally rare early Ming Chinese Imperial embroidered silk tapestry, known as "*thanka*," which measures 3.3 by 2.1 meters, depicting the wrathful Rakayamari embracing his consort Vajraveltali, in Hong Kong April 29. The *thanka*, which was expected to fetch an estimated price of $1.2 million, set a world record for any Asian textile when it sold for $4,013,663 after fierce bidding on Monday.

Airline loses man's wife in transit

LOS ANGELES—It was a routine domestic flight for the elderly couple, but it ended as a five-month nightmare when the airline lost Margie Dabney in transit, her distraught husband claims.

Heartbroken Joe Dabney has sued giant US carrier American Airlines for $10 million for alleged negligence, breach of contract and incompetence in losing 70-year-old Margie, who suffers from Alzheimer's disease and diabetes.

"They have treated her worse than luggage," he said. "They will go and find your luggage. They have found my luggage before but somehow they can't find my wife. I don't know how they let this happen," he said.

The Dabneys, from the central Californian town Bakersfield, were traveling home from their daughter's home in the Midwestern city of Indianapolis on Dec. 5 when Margie disappeared while changing planes in the Dallas, Texas.

The pair had arranged to be escorted off their aircraft and taken to their connecting flight by airline staff, but while Joe was being wheeled off the plane, Margie disappeared, never to be seen by her 63-year-old husband again.

Dabney, a retired taxi driver and construction worker who shared a modest cottage in Bakersfield with his wife of 34 years, claims that airline staff initially refused to go back and get her when she lagged behind in the plane. *AFP*

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TUESDAY REFERENDUM

Musharraf to cement grip on power

MUSHARRAF

ISLAMABAD—Pakistani military ruler Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who seized power in a 1999 coup, takes himself to the polls on Tuesday to seek a mandate to remain president for the next five years.

For the former commando and veteran of two wars with India, the referendum he is sure to win will cement his grip on power in a country the military has run for much of its 55-year history, interspersed with shaky civilian governments.

Since overthrowing former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in a bloodless October 1999 coup, Musharraf appointed himself president in July last year and tightened his grip on power.

Emboldened by a Supreme Court ruling that upheld the coup but set a three-year deadline to restore democratic, civilian rule, he has sidelined the main political parties, dissolved the two houses of parliament and suspended the Constitution.

Musharraf says the previous political leadership had failed Pakistan and that he is needed to ensure a civilian government elected in October will not undo social, economic and political reforms he sees as key for the cash-strapped country's future.

But after holding rallies nationwide in recent weeks, which many people have been forced to attend, critics charge Musharraf has looked less like a general determined to reform Pakistan and more like one of the politicians he says he despises.

Opponents claim Tuesday's referendum, where Musharraf is the only candidate, is unconstitutional as the president should be elected by the parliament and four provincial assemblies.

The Supreme Court on Saturday threw out legal challenges, saying the poll was legal under powers granted to Musharraf.

Born in New Delhi on Aug. 11, 1943, Musharraf migrated to Pakistan with his family after the partition of British India in 1947. He had his early education in the southern city of Karachi and spent some years in Turkey, a Muslim country he admires.

He joined Pakistan's Army in 1964 and served in an artillery regiment after training at the Kakul military academy in North West Frontier Province.

In 1965, he fought Indian troops in the Khem Karan sector in Punjab province during a 16-day war with India, taking part in intense battles for which he received a medal for gallantry.

In 1971, when Pakistan again went to war with India, Musharraf was among the elite Special Services Group commandos.

Musharraf has held senior staff and instructional positions in his rise up the ranks, commanding armored divisions and infantry brigades along the way.

His last key posting before becoming Army chief was in 1995 when, as a lieutenant general, he was commander in Mangla in Punjab province, an important military zone close to the border with India.

He was appointed Army chief in October 1998 after the resignation of former military chief Gen. Jehangir Karamat.

Married with a son and daughter, Musharraf enjoys squash, badminton and golf. He is also a keen canoeist, likes sailing and is well-versed in his favorite subject of military history.

Musharraf's rise to the presidency began on Oct. 12, 1999, as he flew back to Pakistan on board a commercial Pakistan International Airlines flight from Sri Lanka.

Sharif had sacked his Army chief after falling out over various issues and, fearing Musharraf would attempt to grab power, told the flight not to land at its destination, Karachi.

With the aircraft desperately short of fuel, Musharraf loyalists took control of Karachi airport and the plane landed.

The coup followed. Musharraf assumed the role of Chief Executive and Pakistan's fourth period of military rule since independence from Britain in 1947 began. *Reuters*

SOUTH KOREAN Hwang Son-og (left) cries as she meets her North Korean relative she has not seen or talked to since The 1950-53 Korean War at North Korea's Mount Kumgang resort, April 28.

REUTERS

S. Koreans reunited with kin in North after half a century

SEOUL—South Korea's Lee Bu-ja broke down with emotion and cried aloud when she met her older sister in North Korea for the first time in half a century Sunday, and told her their mother in South Korea died two days ago.

"Sister Shin Ho! Sister Shin Ho! You are alive," Bu-ja cried, embracing her. "Until the moment of her death, our mother could never close her eyes peacefully without seeing you."

Their mother, 93-year-old Uh Byung-soon, was one of 99 South Koreans selected to visit North Korea for three days of temporary reunions with their North Korean relatives at a mountain resort on the North's east coast from Sunday. But she died Friday after a long illness, just two days before she was due to meet her second oldest daughter Lee Shin Ho, 67.

Instead, her youngest daughter, Lee Bu-ja, 62, made the voyage to meet her older sister.

Shin Ho went missing shortly after the Korean War broke out in 1950. The family heard nothing from her until Red Cross officials told them in September she was alive in the North.

The reunions were the start of revived reconciliation between the two rival Koreas after months of tensions. They were broadcast live to South Korea. No foreign reporters were allowed to visit the North.

Chung Gwi-up, 75, from South Korea met her husband, Lim Han Un, 74, who went missing shortly after the war started. Lim had remarried in the North and has five children.

"I heard that you had a mistress when you were living with me. Isn't she your wife? Did you bring her with you here?," a teary Chung asked her long-lost husband, holding his hands.

Her husband denied the allegation with a smile, saying: "No. No. You have it all wrong."

When the visitors return home on Tuesday, another 474 South Koreans will depart for the resort the next day for similar reunions with 100 North Korean relatives. The reunions are to be staged alternately due to limited accommodation at the North Korean mountain resort.

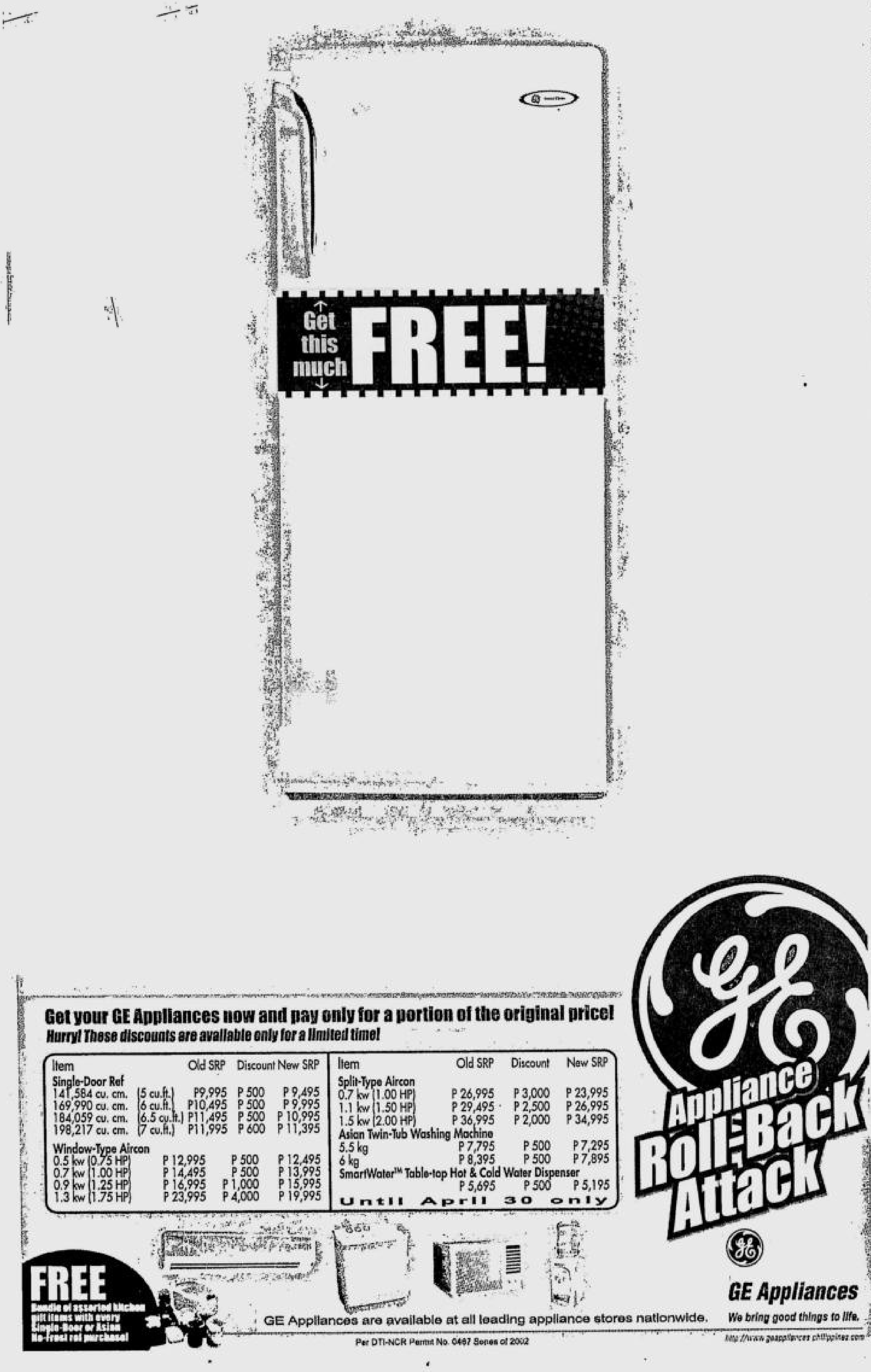
South Korean Red Cross officials said relatives will be allowed to spend a total of 12 hours together, meeting individually or in groups.

The reunions were originally scheduled for October, but North Korea abruptly called off the plan after South Korea put its security forces on alert following the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States.

Ties warmed again after a South Korean envoy visited North Korea in early April and agreed to restart stalled exchanges, including the family reunion project.

Since a historic inter-Korean summit in 2000, the Koreas have held three rounds of reunions for 300 people from each side. This is the fourth. Previous reunions took place in the two Korean capitals—Seoul and Pyongyang.

Reunions of separated family members are a pressing issue as most are old with not long to live. More than 12,000 elderly South Koreans who had registered for reunions have died in the past year. *AP*



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198,217 cu. cm. (7 cu.ft.)	P11,995	P 600	P 11,395
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0.7 kw (1.00 HP)	P 14,495	P 500	P 13,995
0.9 kw (1.25 HP)	P 16,995	P 1,000	P 15,995
1.3 kw (1.75 HP)	P 23,995	P 4,000	P 19,995

Item	Old SRP	Discount	New SRP
Split-Type Aircon			
0.7 kw (1.00 HP)	P 26,995	P 3,000	P 23,995
1.1 kw (1.50 HP)	P 29,495	P 2,500	P 26,995
1.5 kw (2.00 HP)	P 36,995	P 2,000	P 34,995
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US-made bomb kills schoolboys in Vietnam

HANOI—Two schoolboys were killed and eight people injured, including another child, when a US-made cluster bomb they were playing with exploded in northern Vietnam, officials said on Monday.

The bomb exploded last week in the small village of Dinh Tri about 60 km northeast of Hanoi after the boys had fished it out of a canal, a local official said.

"They spotted the bomb while swimming in the canal," said Nguyen Duc Kha, chair of the district People's Committee.

"They were playing with it when it exploded."

He said the boys were both about 13. One died immediately and the other the next morning in a hospital.

Khai said eight people, one of them a child, were injured in the explosion. One of the adults injured was in critical condition, he said.

Khai said the bomb was of a type dropped from US war planes in cluster canisters at the beginning of the Vietnam War and was designed to look like the fruit of the locally grown Tung tree, which are pressed to produce oil used to make lacquers and varnished.

He said many unexploded bombs designed to look like pineapples had also been found in the area over the years.

The accident happened just days ahead of celebrations in Vietnam to market the 27th anniversary of the communist victory in the war on April 30, 1975.

Ten days ago, an 11-year-old boy and a woman were killed in a similar accident involving a cluster bomblet in the northern province of Nghe An.

Explosions of ordnance left over from the war kill and maim dozens of civilians each year, many of them children. *Reuters*

Martial law sought for Maluku

JAKARTA—Indonesia's military said on Monday it wants martial law imposed on Maluku province (Moluccan islands) after at least 12 people were killed in weekend attacks that raised fresh doubts about a fragile peace pact in the troubled region.

The killings came after several days of unrest in Ambon city, the capital of the Maluku province and scene of religious clashes that have claimed thousands of lives in the last three years.

"Give us the legal umbrella. If this nation sees the situation can only be dealt with by martial law, let us act accordingly through (a legal way)," army chief Gen. Endriartono Sutarto told a news conference in Jakarta.

"So, if we take steps in order to secure the safety of the people, we won't become victims," he added.

Indonesia troops have in the past been accused of quashing unrest in the sometimes fractious country without regard to laws or human rights—charges the military denies.

Extra troops and police patrolled the streets of Ambon on Monday and some residents reported hearing a few explosions overnight.

"There were still some explosions . . . in Mardika and Karangpanjang but today it is more calm though still tense," resident Lies Atapari said by phone, referring to areas of the city.

"Traffic is as usual, some businesses are open but there are more troops and police on the streets," she added.

Unidentified attackers raided a Christian neighborhood in the capital early on Sunday, and a local journalist said residents blamed Muslims for the attack, saying some of them had military weapons and wore uniforms.

Military chief Admiral Widodo A.S. repeated earlier denials that the military was involved, but said he was concerned about the number of weapons in the region.

"You know that one of the conflict's potential is the spread of weapons outside . . . including standard military weapons. We must eliminate that potential," he told the news conference.

Parts of Maluku, including Ambon, are still under a civil emergency, one level down from martial law, although apart from the past week's unrest the region has been calm since the deal was signed.

Indonesia has suffered from a series of religious, ethnic and separatist conflicts since the autocratic Suharto resigned from the presidency in 1998, bringing tensions to the surface that were largely restrained under his iron rule.

Over the past three years, at least 5,000 people have been killed in religious clashes in Ambon, some 2,300 km east of Jakarta, and in the Moluccan island chain of which it is the hub.

Some of the violence has involved para-military units affiliated with various Muslim and Christian groups. But critics also accuse many soldiers of taking sides and extorting protection money.

More than 85 percent of Indonesia's 210 million people are Muslim, but Christians comprise half the population in some eastern areas, such as Maluku. *Reuters*

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms mostly over the Eastern section.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	HI35° Lo 25°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	HI 27° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	HI 36° Lo 22°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	HI 34° Lo 25°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	HI 35° Lo 24°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 26°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	HI 33° Lo 25°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	HI 34° Lo 26°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 27°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	HI 33° Lo 26°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	HI 34° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy	HI 33° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	HI 35° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	HI 33° Lo 23°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	HI 34° Lo 25°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/04/30/02

ROUNDUP

Patrol boat for Batanes

BASCO, Batanes—Environment officials here acquired a P1.9-million patrol boat to help stop smugglers, poachers and those involved in illegal fishing in this northernmost province. George Reyes, protected area superintendent of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, said the patrol boat, with a full speed of 32 knots, was acquired through funds from the World Bank. The boat is equipped with modern communications and navigational equipment.

Juliet Cataluña, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Communist extortionists

BALANGA CITY—A top police official here has asked residents to report to authorities the extortion activities of communist rebels who have been victimizing fishpond owners in the province. Senior Supt. Sahiron Salim, Bataan police director, said villagers could either call or text him to report the activities of the rebels. He also asked village officials to be vigilant in monitoring the activities of rebels who will try to sow terror during the July 15 barangay elections.

Greg Refraccion, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Vice mayor's plight

SANTA FE, Nueva Vizcaya—Despite his being cleared by a tribal court of the charge of raping a 21-year-old Kalanguya woman, residents are calling for the resignation and prosecution of Vice Mayor Donior Tidang. "While we respect the culture of our brothers in the Kalanguya tribe, (Tidang) should still be made answerable before us, the non-Kalanguya who he also pledged to serve with integrity," Cupido Cruz, Barangay Poblacion chief, said. But Tidang dismissed the calls for his resignation as "all politically motivated." "I have already asked forgiveness from our gods. My wife and my family have forgiven me, and I have apologized to my constituents in Santa Fe," he said.

Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Unruly ex-mayor

DUMAGUETE CITY—The former mayor of La Libertad, Negros Oriental town was "invited" by police to stay for the night at the police headquarters for unruly drunken behavior on Saturday night. Napoleon Camero was made to stay at the police station to sober up, said police provincial director Senior Supt. Drusillo Bolodo. Camero started breaking bottles after he got drunk in one of the stalls at the town plaza set up for the fiesta. No charges were filed against the former mayor.

Alex V. Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau

Gang leader killed

TABACO CITY—Police said they have busted the notorious Alama gang when its latest victim, who was seriously wounded, shot dead the group's leader last week in Barangay Mariroc, this city. A police report identified the slain gang leader as Marianito Alama, 36, and the victim as retired jail officer Reynaldo Borromeo, 57, who suffered bullet and stab wounds. Alama was pronounced dead on arrival at the Bicol Regional Training Hospital where his younger brother Ricardo brought him. Tango said the Alama brothers and a certain Francisco Sosito tried to rob the store of Borromeo who fired shots hitting Marianito. Police arrested Ricardo but Sosito escaped.

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Swindling gang busted

LEGAZPI CITY—Police have warned the public against members of swindling syndicates here. The warning was made after operatives of the Daraga Police Office arrested five members of a "Budol-Budol" gang who tried to victimize a music store. Police identified the suspects as Jocelyn Morante, 21, of Pakil, Laguna; Jocelyn Gianan, 27, of Taal, Batangas; Arnel Magallanes, 25, of Masbate City; Rudy Gianan, 20, of San Andres, Catanduanes; and Godofredo Gianan, 33, alleged gang leader, of San Andres, Catanduanes. The gang allegedly duped the music storeowner by offering an assured winning combination in lotto in exchange for money and guitars. The victim, however, immediately asked the assistance of the Daraga police, which arrested the suspects upon their return.

Tony S. Macasinag, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Not enough guards

LEGAZPI CITY—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources claimed it has only 126 forest rangers assigned to guard 541,189 hectares of forestlands in the Bicol Region. "This means a ratio of one forest ranger patrolling at least 4,300 hectares," DENR regional executive director Oscar M. Hamada said in a report to the recent Regional Peace and Order Council meeting. A forest ranger is also not allowed to carry firearms. "All he has is a marking hatchet, ballpen and pencil, and a piece of paper against the Armalites of illegal loggers," Hamada said.

Job B. Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

PAMPANGA MAIN BENEFICIARY

GMA junks Erap quarry order

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—President Macapagal-Arroyo revoked an order of former President Joseph Estrada that guided quarry operations in Central Luzon, effectively giving back the control of the multimillion-peso sand industry in Pampanga to the provincial government.

In canceling Estrada's Proclamation No. 66 through Ms Macapagal's Proclamation No. 183, the President also ended the three-year legal dispute between the provincial government and the Natural Resources Development Corp. of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources over the collection of quarry taxes.

The new proclamation, which was signed on April 23, said "sound governance demands that control and supervision over those river systems and the exploitation and utilization of sand and lahar deposits in the area be returned to the local government units concerned."

The sand-rich provinces of Tarlac and Zambales also benefited from the order. The President's home province of Pampanga, however, benefited the most since it was its provincial government that questioned the validity of Estrada's order.

Estrada issued the proclamation on the heels of alleged irregularities in quarry collections during the second term of his political enemy, Pampanga Gov. Manuel Lapid.

Since Estrada placed the management of quarry sites and the collection of taxes in the NRDC in February 1999, the Pampanga provincial government had lost an average of P2 million in monthly revenues.

The NRDC still owes the provincial government at least P103.7 million in shares from quarry taxes since 1999, according to provincial administrator Benalfre Galang.

In the new proclamation, Ms Macapagal said Estrada's order "virtually deprived" the three provinces "supervision and control over the river systems and embankments found within their respective territorial jurisdictions."

Mt. Pinatubo's eruption in 1991, although catastrophic in scale and scope, gave abundant sand to the three provinces that surround the volcano.

In annulling Proclamation No. 66, the President recognized the power and rights of local governments over natural resources.

"The Local Government Code of 1991 mandates that local government units shall have an equitable share derived from the utilization and development of the national wealth within their respective areas, including sharing the same with the inhabitants by way of direct benefits," the new order said.

In December last year, the regional trial court ruled that the provincial government has the primary right to collect quarry taxes. The court also ruled that Estrada's proclamation merely ordered the NRDC and the DENR to supervise sand-rich areas.

To Lapid, the new proclamation signaled the "victory" of the provincial government.

"The fight (against the NRDC) is over," he told the INQUIRER by telephone. "The President has recognized the correctness of our clamor. Surely, we will use the quarry revenues to augment funds for social services and infrastructure projects." ***Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Hope held high for boy struck with rare virus

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The 11-year-old scion of the prominent Larrazabal clan is showing signs of recovery after being reported clinically dead when a rare virus afflicted him and his 11 cousins.

But Marcos Larrazabal II, a dirt road motorcycle champion, is in coma for more than 15 days now at the Cebu Doctors Hospital (CDH) here.

Dr. Potenciano Larrazabal, who also owns the hospital, however, said his nephew's condition is improving.

"The boy is still alive although he is still in coma. We still continue to support him. We are hoping that he will eventually wake up because so far, his vital signs are okay," he told the INQUIRER.

Dr. Larrazabal said there is a bigger chance for a comatose patient to wake up if he has shown signs of improvement.

While Marcos II's breathing is still being supported by a machine, he said the boy has shown signs indicating that his brain is already functioning.

He also noted improvements in the boy's blood pressure and kidney functions.

Before, Dr. Larrazabal said the boy's blood pressure was supported by medication because he had no blood pressure at all.

But now, he added, the medication for his blood pressure has stopped because the boy is maintaining his own blood pressure.

VAL HANDUMON

LIFE IN THE BALANCE

Walking on narrow, thin wooden bridges like daredevils walk on tightropes has become daily routine for members of this Badjao tribe in Taluksangay, Zamboanga City.

Mamburao residents rally vs blackouts

By Mei Magsino
PDI S. Luzon Bureau

MAMBURAO, Occidental Mindoro—Residents of this capital town, which has been experiencing blackouts every month since 1974, staged a prayer rally last week to protest the persistent power failure that hampers the trade and agricultural development of their town.

Joined by residents of Abra de Ilog and Sta. Cruz towns, the prayer rally at the town's gymnasium mustered over 100 participants from the business, church and government sectors.

Samahan ng mga Mangangalakal ng Mamburao chair Leny Cosuco said the constant blackout has been one of the causes of the slow development of the provinces' northern towns despite their rich natural resources. Mamburao, Abra de Ilog and Sta. Cruz are considered among the food baskets of Luzon.

Baby Bico, a tuna trader, said during the last several days of blackout this April, that she was forced to bury tons of giant red and yellow fin tuna that had rotted in her freezer.

The constant and unannounced blackouts also bogged down the machines and equipment of the town's two ice plants, according to Rodolfo Plopiño, farm manager of the Jopson Aqua Livestock and Integrated Resources Inc. and who runs an ice plant.

Although most of the traders in the area have standby generators, thousands of refrigerators, computer sets, TV sets and other electronic appliances burned due to the persistent sudden blackouts followed by the sudden resumption of power and then blackouts again.

Napocor engineer Ramon Osabel said "The main problem comes from the transmission lines, which are located in the mountainous areas. When forest fire caused by *kaingin* spreads, the posts burn and fall down." 'That's when we lose power and activate our generators," he added.

Solon says high power rates block progress in Negros

By Alex V. Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—Negros Oriental Rep. Herminio G. Teves is pushing for reforms in the electric power industry to eliminate the one-grid, one-rate policy of the National Power Corporation.

He told the INQUIRER on Sunday that the Napocor's policy to impose a uniform rate for the entire grid is a deterrent to industrialization, especially for Negros Island, because it can no longer offer a cheap rate, even if it is a source of geothermal energy.

Teves said that when the Philippine National Oil Company started generating geothermal energy in 1983, Negros consumers were asked to pay a much higher rate compared to the time when power was generated through diesel generators.

With the installation of a transmission line to Negros Occidental in 1984, the province consumed 80 percent of the power and Negros Oriental, 20 percent, Teves said.

In 1990 and 1993, the Napocor connected Negros Island to Panay and Cebu with submarine cables, at a total cost of $44 million.

The added cost of installing the submarine cable was borne by the Negros consumers through an increased electric rate, under which industrialization is no longer viable, said Teves.

He said electric power rate in the Philippines is the second highest in South East Asia, next to Japan.

He said that to industrialize, the cost of electricity should be lowered. He cited the case of Iligan City, where industries mushroomed despite its peace and order problems then.

Teves also assailed the imposition of the power purchase adjustment, the fuel price cost adjustment and forex charges on consumers' electric bills.

The cost of the installation of geothermal power systems should have been fully paid after 15 years and the continued collection of the foreign exchange adjustment in the Palinpinon power plant is questionable.

He said there should also be no fuel adjustment because geothermal plants are powered by steam.

Teves said the Palinpinon Geothermal Plants should have been a big boost to the industrialization of Negros Island.

Balweg militia studying peace pact with NPA

BAGUIO CITY—The militia of slain rebel priest Conrado Balweg is discussing a ceasefire, and a potential peace agreement with its erstwhile enemy, the New People's Army, according to the group's lawyer.

The Cordillera People's Liberation Army faction loyal to Balweg "was presented with a formal offer of peace from an NPA emissary on April 24, and we are studying that offer very seriously," said lawyer Nestor Atitiw, the CPLA counsel and president of the Cordillera Bodong Administration (CBAd).

Majority of Balweg's old army remain cautious about the peace overtures, said Atitiw, because most of Balweg's forces broke off personal and ideological ties with the NPA in 1982 to form the CPLA and fight for Cordillera autonomy.

Jovencio Balweg, the CPLA founder's younger brother and an NPA commander, also claimed credit for the assassination of the rebel priest on Dec. 31, 1999 in their Abra hometown. That claim had since been disputed by the siblings' older brother, retired Prof. Bienvenido Balweg.

"But the (CPLA Bodong) Congress (which asserts policy over the CPLA militia) resolved to study its potentials for peace. A ceasefire will be very healthy for the region, and we may also end up talking about a peace accord. But it is too early to say. Right now, 70 percent of the CPLA originals are uncertain (about a ceasefire), and the congress wants a thorough evaluation and projection of this offer," Atitiw told the INQUIRER.

Kalinga was the host of two separate Cordillera Day celebrations on April 24, which supposedly bridged the peace offer.

Atitiw said the peace offer was first discussed by a CPLA commander and an NPA emissary during the 17th Cordillera Day anniversary in Tabuk, Kalinga, which is annually sponsored throughout the Cordillera by the Left-leaning Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA) to honor the slain Kalinga chieftain Macli-ing Dulag.

The offer was presented later to CPLA's Bodong Congress in Tinglayan town during the Cordillera Day celebrations. Joan Carling, CPA chair, said she was not aware of any peace offers being discussed during their Cordillera Day forum.

The NPA's Alejo Cawilan Command has jurisdiction over Kalinga, although the INQUIRER has not yet been able to confirm whether the NPA emissary came from that unit.

The ceasefire offer may, in fact, have substantial repercussions on ongoing tribal conflicts in Kalinga between tribal members involved with both the CPLA and the NPA, Atitiw said.

Police records at Camp Dangwa in La Trinidad, Benguet, identify the CPLA members involved in the skirmishes between the Betwagan tribe of Sadanga, Mt. Province, and the Bugnay tribe of Tinglayan, Kalinga, as members of CPLA factions.

These factions are led by former NPA guerrillas, James Sawatang and Mayor Mailed Molina of Bucloc, Abra, reports said.

The conflict involves a tribal boundary that was once settled by Macli-ing Dulag.

Atitiw said the ceasefire talks between the NPA and the CPLA surfaced here, while the militia faction's talks with Malacañang remained at "an ambiguous state." ***Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

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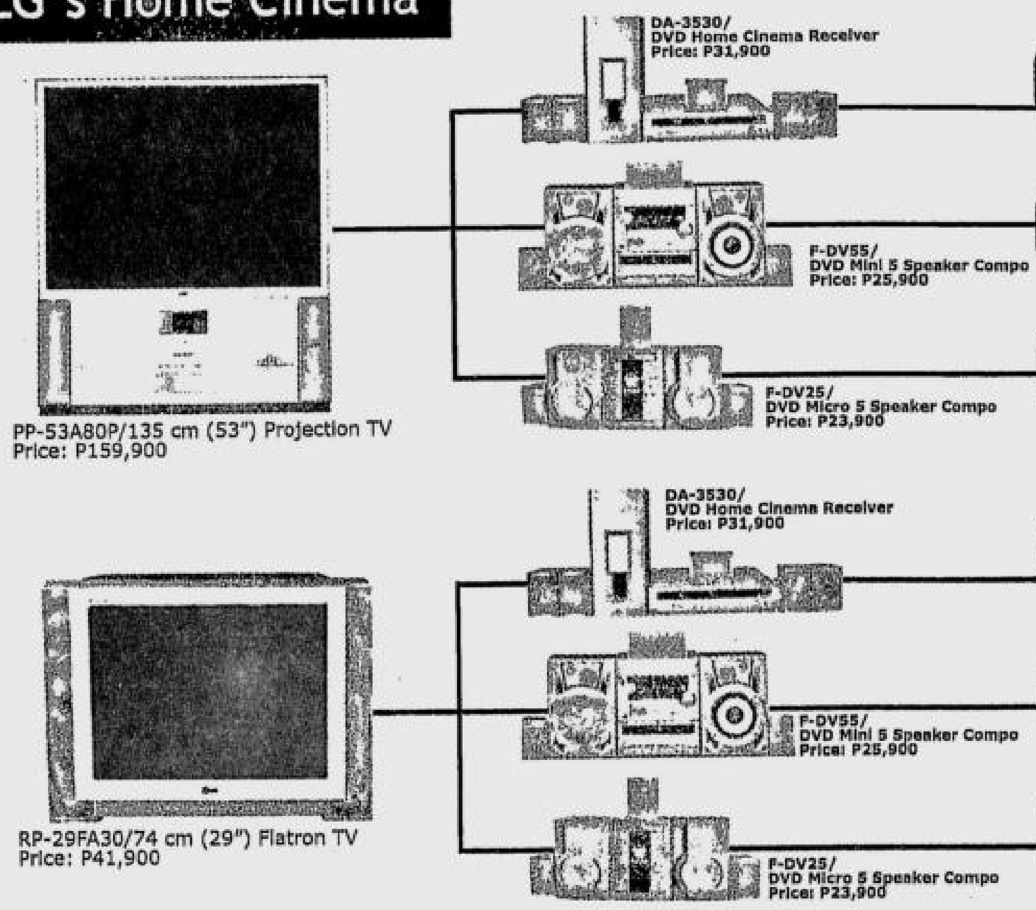

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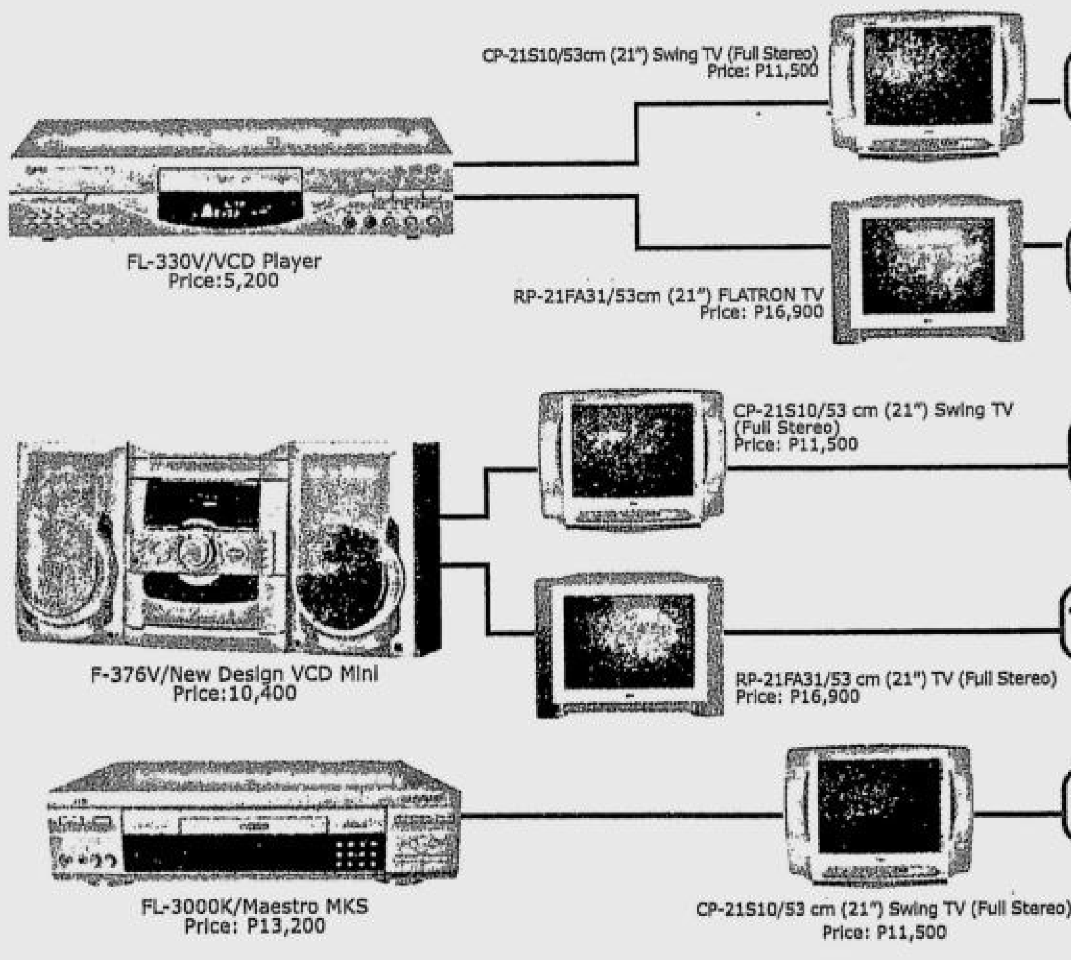

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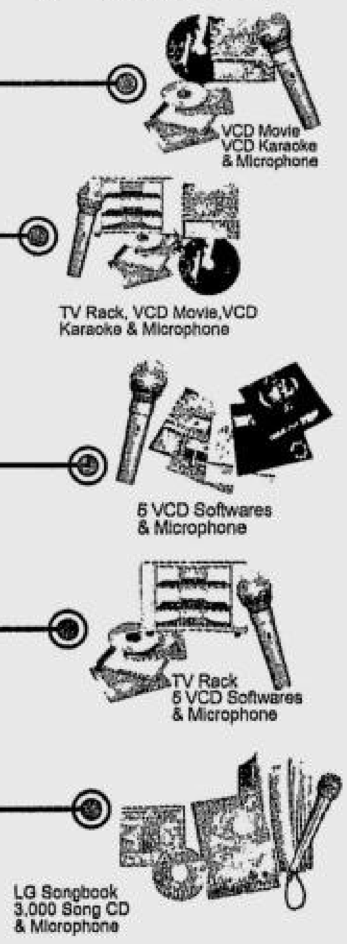

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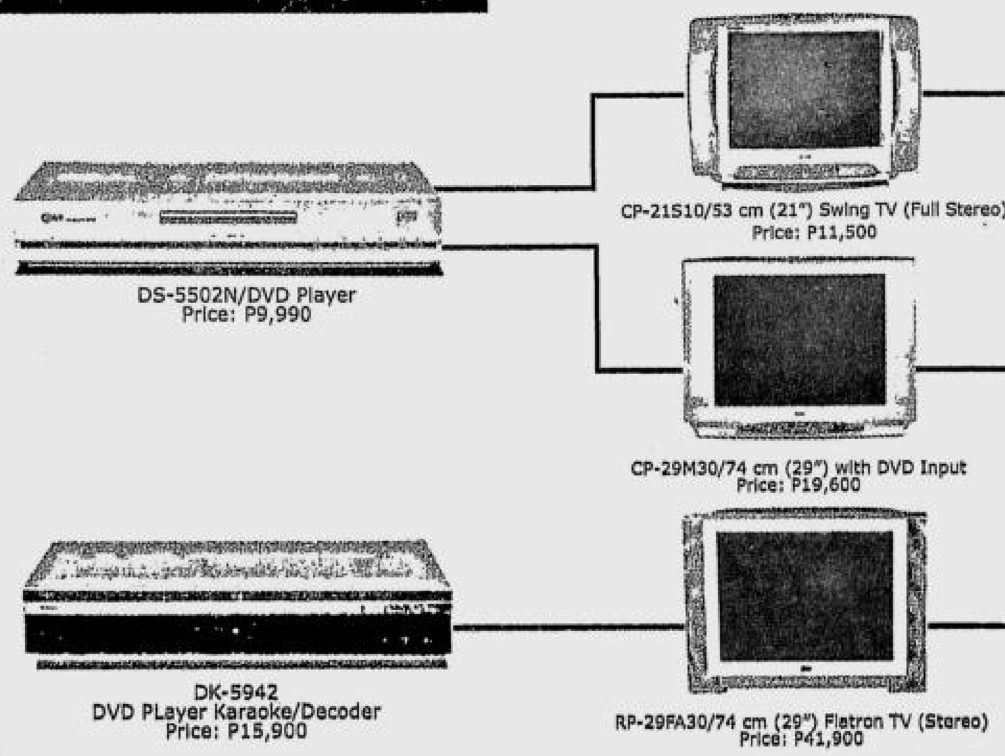

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Macapagal foes join forces

From page A1

those who want change."

Montayre said the PCA sent an open letter to Estrada on April 19 "asking him to revoke his leave of absence and assert his rights."

"But this time, he should not sit as President," Montayre said. "He will merely establish a body that will represent the broad sectors, and this will push for the creation of a parliamentary form of government."

The assembly also decided to converge on Mendiola, Manila, at 2 p.m. of Labor Day.

"There, we will discuss what will come next," Montayre said. "We would have to get a feel of the pulse of the people"

In Malacañang, acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable challenged political parties and groups wanting to unseat Ms Macapagal to give it their best shot in the 2004 election.

Afable said these groups should stick to the parameters of political action defined by the 1987 Constitution and "let the people see their agenda and how their agenda can capture the imagination and the support of the people."

"To openly espouse (the) ouster (of the President) does not necessarily mean that they are harboring rebellious or seditious designs," Afable told reporters.

"If it is ouster by election or any other means defined in the Constitution, they are welcome to voice whatever they want," he said.

Reminded by a reporter that it was not yet election time, he said: "No. I was talking about the election in 2004."

But Remulla said the President should be wary, not of Estrada supporters, but of the "junta from within."

Remulla said the President should be particularly wary of Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes.

Mock trial

One of the highlights of the assembly was a mock trial of the President, who was charged with betrayal of the public trust, violation of the Constitution and of human rights, and graft and corruption.

A "tribunal" found the President "guilty," warranting her removal from office.

The organizers said the decision of the "tribunal" would be disseminated fully.

Montayre said Estrada's revocation of his leave of absence would merely be a "pathway to create (a coalition government)."

Asked if this would end Estrada's detention, she said: "That's true. But from what we understand from our talks, once the parliamentary system is formed, he still wants his trial to continue. But this time, it would be under a new system of government, it would not be biased."

The assembly—numbering about 600 at its peak and dwindling to about 200 late in the day—ratified the letter to Estrada even if a copy had already been sent to him.

Montayre said that based on her analysis, the country actually had two Presidents—one *de jure* and the other *de facto*.

She said the then Vice President Macapagal had chosen the supposedly constitutional path to justify her assumption of the presidency.

"But if we look at it, the presidency was not vacated because Estrada did not resign . . ." Montayre said. "So what is the basis for her assumption? She did not declare a revolutionary government."

At one point, a group professing support for Ms Macapagal massed in front of the Club Filipino.

The group, numbering about 50 and including members of a National Alliance for Democracy, called on Honasan and others assembled inside to distance themselves from the PCA.

Constitutional standards

Afable said Malacañang would not go after "any movement, as long as it is organized and follows the constitutional standards of political action."

"You have the administration, you have the opposition, and you have different groups that would like to bring their agenda to the public," he said. "Of course, the Constitution sets the rules for these agenda to be discussed and taken up publicly."

Political groups and even coalitions "involved in the democratic system" are "welcome in the political arena" if they follow the Constitution," Afable said.

He said the opposition could avail itself of "all the creative means to stage protests or to pursue its agenda."

But "the ultimate measure is popular support, and this will come into play as the situation goes on," he pointed out.

Referring to the 2004 electoral contest, Afable said: "If they are supported by the people, we'll see by then."

He said the criticisms against the Macapagal administration were "a normal offshoot of democratic politics" that allowed room for debates.

As long as the opposition follows the rules provided by the Constitution, "I think (criticism) enriches the debate," he said.

Rousing defeat

But disgruntled militant groups said they would work to ensure that Ms Macapagal would "suffer one of the most rousing defeats in the history of presidential elections in the country."

The Kilusang Mayo Uno, which was among those who took part in Estrada's ouster, said the May 1 rallies would signify the start of the national campaign to remove Ms Macapagal from Malacañang.

"We will work intensely to foil (her) attempts to remain in power beyond 2004," KMU secretary general Elmer Labog said in a statement.

"Since the first day of the presidency, (she) has offended the people by clearly showing her bias for the military, private businesses and foreign powers," he said.

Another labor alliance, the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino, will also hold a rally tomorrow to mark Labor Day and to denounce the administration's "anti-worker policies."

Members of the KMU will gather at the Bonifacio Shrine near Mehan Garden, TM Kalaw Street corner Taft Avenue, and the Manila Central Office at 10 a.m. The contingent will march to Mendiola.

The BMP and the People's Movement against Poverty, a pro-Estrada urban poor group, are also scheduled to use Mendiola for their Labor Day rallies.

The Pamalakaya's Gerry Albert-Corpuz said many sectors, including the labor and urban poor sectors, had become extremely dissatisfied with the administration and would be joining the planned rallies.

Corpuz said Ms Macapagal's supposed plans for 2004 would "not merit the electorate's sentiment and collective will."

Militant groups in Davao City will also use Labor Day to launch the "Oust GMA" campaign.

Omar Bantayan, acting secretary general of the Nagkahiusang Mamumuo sa Habagatang Mindanao-KMU, said Ms Macapagal was "the epitome of a first-rate puppet, and just like her foreign master, she holds a record of human rights violations."

But he said that in their campaign for the President's ouster, they would not join the Estrada forces.

"Certainly, we denounce a *coup d' etat*," he said. "We do not want a civilian-military junta.

Florentina Cabatingan, regional vice president of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP), said all labor organizations were on the same track as to labor issues. But she said she did not foresee unity with the militant KMU because of political issues.

The President is expected to visit Davao City tomorrow and speak before thousands of workers, most of them TUCP members.

Dramatization

Remulla said the Estrada forces would not repeat the last year's May 1 attack on Malacañang.

"Everything (that we'll do tomorrow) will be just a dramatization, a wake-up call, a statement to the international community that we can do things peacefully," he said, adding:

"We are advocating change. We are not advocating violent change. We do not want violence."

The concern of Estrada supporters is that no outside forces would "infiltrate" their ranks on May 1.

Herman Tiu Laurel talked of "security concerns we've discovered" that made them change plans for tomorrow.

But he would not mention details, and simply called on all Estrada supporters not to bring bags, knapsacks or backpacks.

Remulla said they had received reports that certain forces within the Macapagal group were planning to instigate violence on May 1, and blame this on Estrada supporters.

"This would then be used as an excuse to justify a crackdown, or maybe set up a junta," Remulla said. "We're becoming a police state, and the only constituency left with Gloria is really the military and the police, which are also doubtful right now."

He said "the civil forces, the academe, students, especially the Left, have already awakened."

Remulla said the administration was now "very paranoid." But the President should be afraid of "friendly forces," he said.

Asked who was the most dangerous person now, Remulla said: "Angie Reyes. *Taksil, e* (He's a traitor). He did it before, he can do it again." ***With reports from Blanche S. Rivera in Manila; Ayan C. Mellejor, Joel B. Escovilla and Anthony A. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

GMA down, rivals up in latest Pulse Asia survey

From page A1

Although it was still negative, it was "an improvement of sorts from his -9 net rating" in the last quarter of 2001.

"The improvement comes not from having more people trusting him as having less people who distrust him," Pulse Asia said.

Pulse Asia noted that Estrada registered "positive net trust ratings in the balance of Luzon outside the National Capital Region (+7, with 36 percent assigning big trust, as opposed to 29 percent assigning small or no trust) and in Mindanao (+14, with 44 percent assigning big trust, and 30 percent assigning small or no trust)."

Lacson's rating up

The net trust rating of Lacson, Estrada's national police chief, rose to 12 from -7 in the last quarter of 2001. Only the ABC class gave him a net distrust.

"Moving from net distrust by the national public in December 2001 to being net trusted by the same public in April 2002 is indicative of how the erstwhile much beleaguered senator has been able to rehabilitate his public image," Pulse Asia said.

The survey outfit was apparently referring to charges of money laundering, drug trafficking and other high crimes leveled against Lacson by military intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus.

Bush and Bin Laden

Ms Macapagal, Estrada, Angara, Lacson and Arroyo were five of 12 personalities, including US President George Bush and al-Qaida leader Osama bin laden, trust-rated in the survey. Bush got a net trust rating of 43 and Bin Laden, -78.

The others in descending order of trust ratings were Chief Justice Hilario Davide, 23; House Speaker Jose de Venecia, 9; and Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin, 2.

Of the local figures, Ms Macapagal's husband Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo got the lowest trust rating at -18, followed by Sandiganbayan presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena, -10.

Despite the drop in her net trust rating, the President's net approval rating of 36 in the first quarter of 2002 "remains virtually unchanged" from its level of 37 in the previous quarter.

Pulse Asia said that 57 percent of the respondents approved of her performance while 21 percent disapproved and 22 percent remained undecided.

Rich give President low rate

The polling firm noted that the better-off class ABC gave her the lowest rating of 51 percent while the "most numerous but not so poor" class D rated her generously at 58 percent. The poorest class E gave her a "moderately liberal" approval rating of 56 percent.

"Public disapproval for the President is most apparent among those from class ABC (26 percent) and less in the case of those from classes D and E (both 20 percent)," Pulse Asia said.

The net approval ratings of other government officials were as follows: Vice President Teofisto Guingona, 33; Senate President Franklin Drilon, 44; De Venecia, 28; and Davide, 36.

"Roughly a third of those surveyed are unable or unwilling to make up their minds" on several political issues, Pulse Asia said.

For example, 36 percent of the respondents agreed to the statement that the Macapagal administration was doing more to fight graft and corruption compared with the Estrada administration. Thirty-two percent disagreed while the remaining 32 percent couldn't make up their minds.

Cautious

The survey also showed the following "cautious, wait-and-see attitude" to the following concerns:

- Compared with the past administration, the Macapagal administration has less concern for the poor: 36 percent agreed; 34 percent, undecided; and 29 percent disagreed.
- The Macapagal administration is doing everything it can to improve the life of poor Filipinos: 48 percent agreed; 31 percent, undecided; and 21 percent disagreed.
- The Macapagal administration is liberal and just in dealing with Estrada: 34 percent agreed; 38 percent, undecided; and 27 percent disagreed.
- The courts are unfair and favor some parties in handling the cases of Estrada: 36 percent agreed; 33 percent, undecided; and 31 percent disagreed.
- It is better to allow Estrada to leave the country than to detain him until the courts decide his cases: 32 percent agreed; 28 percent, undecided; and 39 percent disagreed.
- It is likely that there will again be much disorder because of what Estrada supporters will do: 28 percent agreed; 37 percent, undecided; and 34 percent disagreed.

Level of public indecision

Felipe Miranda, research director for the Ulat ng Bayan (Report to the Nation) survey, expressed concern over what he described as "the high level of public vacillation on the Estrada-related issues."

"In handling the case of the former President, close to four out of 10 claim uncertainty in assessing whether the (Macapagal) administration has been liberal and just in dealing with the imprisoned Estrada," Miranda said.

One out of three respondents is also unable to agree or disagree whether the courts are fair with Estrada.

Miranda likewise noted that 37 percent vacillated on the likelihood that disorder, similar to the May 1, 2001 failed rebellion of Estrada supporters, would happen again.

Miranda "believes that the high level of public indecision on matters relating to the former President should make the (Macapagal) administration cautious in dealing with him and his supporters."

"Official actions and statements that might be interpreted as provocative by the latter could trigger reactions that put at risk the public's safety and the nation's political stability," Pulse Asia advised.

Hard times

On the economic front, Pulse Asia said, "hard times continue for most Filipinos."

Pulse Asia said 46 percent of the respondents felt that the quality of their life worsened this year compared with 2001, while 20 percent felt their lives got better.

Thirty-four percent felt that their quality of life remained the same.

The poorest class E had the highest percentage of people feeling they were worse off (52 percent) and the lowest percentage of people feeling they were better off (17 percent).

Compared with the ABC class of whom 42 percent believed that things would get better, only 22 percent in class E expected things to improve.

"A big plurality (47 percent) of the E class feel that their quality of life won't change," Pulse Asia said.

Pulse Asia said the country's economic recovery, poverty, low pay and high prices "are by far the most urgent of the respondents' national concerns."

Public safety and political issues are not of major concern for respondents as nine out of 10 placed economic concerns among their top four worries.

The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent and a 95-percent confidence level.

"Pulse Asia conducted this regular quarterly survey on its own initiative," the poll company said.

Gloria mad . . .

From page A1

politicians and the other among mass-based and civil society groups—to "consolidate" political support for the President at present and later serve as her machinery for reelection in 2004.

Gonzales then said: "Of course she will run."

When the INQUIRER cautioned him that Ms Macapagal will most likely deny it, Gonzales simply shrugged, saying that if he were a politician, he won't play the denial game.

Top of mind

Yesterday, Ms Macapagal would only admit to strengthening her political machinery "but only to get the support of the people for my programs at present and not for 2004."

"What is on top of my mind is what I can do for the people at this stage, at this moment," the President said during the radio interview.

"I was mad at him (Gonzales)," the President said.

Ms Macapagal may be mad but no sanctions are to be imposed on Gonzales, also chair of the Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas.

Acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable said Gonzales was just "speaking out of a lot of personal enthusiasm."

"There are no plans to have any official action against him," Afable said. "I think the President does not have to issue a gag order."

Gonzales was interviewed last April 22, the same day the INQUIRER ran a story quoting unnamed sources who stated that the Macapagal camp is building up the President's personal machinery for 2004.

Sources earlier said that Gonzales is playing a key role in this effort.

'Too focused'

Months ago, Liberal Party (LP) president Batanes Rep. Florencio "Butch" Abad had said that Ms Macapagal is "too focused on 2004."

Tarlac Rep. Gilbert Teodoro Jr., a ranking official of the NPC, said "we expect her to run for 2004 and it's logical for us to support her."

Teodoro's uncle businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco is NPC chair.

"The NPC is a part of the administration coalition (in Congress) so at this point, it is natural for us to be supportive of the President," Teodoro said in a phone interview.

Teodoro qualified that he could not speak for his party mates but that so far, "the indication is that we are with her."

He, however, said that the NPC would go through the process of party consultations in the run up to the 2004 presidential derby.

Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, an LP official, said that majority of the party members are supportive of the President's future plans.

"But our veteran members say it's too early (to say)," Aquino said.

Aquino said, "The party is supportive but how intense the support would still be subject to a decision."

Though Gonzales told the INQUIRER that the Macapagal camp would be holding talks with the LP, NPC and other parties for a coalition to support her presidential bid, both Aquino and Teodoro were unaware of such alleged talks.

Naive

Bulacan Rep. Willie B. Villarama described Gonzales' statement as naive.

"I cannot believe what I read about Norberto Gonzales," Villarama said. "Being a pro in the political arena, he will definitely not divulge an information close to the truth," said Villarama who served as chief of staff for then Vice President Macapagal.

"And for people who think that an incumbent President, allowed by law to run again, will not to prepare for the next presidential elections, is being naive and unrealistic," Villarama added.

Villarama had a piece of unsolicited advice to his former boss.

"GMA should not be embarrassed if she is perceived to be campaigning already. She wants to be a good President and this entails going around and talking to the people," he said.

Gloria rules out pay hike for workers

From page A1

less. But at least we arrested the growth of the unemployed," said the President, who will spend Labor Day in Davao, Cebu and Manila.

Many of the people who joined the ranks of the unemployed lost their jobs because of the influx of cheap foreign goods into the country. Local companies that could not compete with the foreign goods were forced to close down.

The influx of foreign goods was made possible by the rules of the World Trade Organization (WO) to which the country is a signatory.

Level playing field

The Trade Union Congress of the Philippines wants the government to push for the ratification of an International Labor Organization convention to give countries belonging to the WTO an equal playing field and to protect Philippine industries.

Florentina Cabatingan said the Philippines had no restrictions on the entry of foreign products.

She said the TUCP would gather a million signatures to urge the government to push for the ratification of the ILO convention.

The ILO convention, which includes the Maternity Protection Law and other labor-friendly provisions, will compel WTO-member countries to adopt it as a law, according to Cabatingan.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II had earlier urged Philippine industries, especially those engaged in exports, to enhance their competitiveness to cope with the challenges of globalization.

"Our industries should be vigilant so that China will not end up eating our market share in the global market, especially in our major trading partners—the United States, the European Union and Japan," Roxas said in a statement. ***With a report from Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

'Do not panic . . .

From page A1

retired generals like me?"

Re-enacting a scene from late last year, Ramos held yet another press briefing on Malacañang grounds to deny that he had a hand in the latest campaign against Ms Macapagal. In fact, he said, he was also a victim of the same "demolition job" aimed at the President.

He said his former subordinates opposing Ms Macapagal were acting on their own.

"I'm seeing this as a demolition job not only against me but also against President Macapagal-Arroyo and her administration," he said as he stood beside the flagpole in front of Kalayaan Hall. Last October he also called an impromptu briefing near the same flagpole to deny that he had a hand in the coup rumors then circulating.

Useless exercise

Ramos, who had just arrived from a two-week trip in the United States, described the attempt to set up a civilian-military junta as a "useless exercise in demolition led by the opposition and maybe some others who do not want our country to prosper."

When told that some of his former men were involved, Ramos said these people went on their own after his presidency ended in 1998.

"That is their own opinion, their own conscience, their own movement . . . But we were together in putting into the presidency President Gloria Macapagal-Aroyo because we were united in opposing a non-performing (president)," he said.

Ramos also denied a militant group's charge that he works for a US-based defense contractor involved in the US military's civil engineering projects in Basilan.

He said he sits in the Asian advisory board of the Carlyle Group, but is not involved in the firm's operations and management.

The Carlyle Group is the US defense department's leading contractors. Founded in 1987, it is one of the world's largest and most powerful equity invested firms.

Ramos said he was invited to the board two years ago "and I accepted because it's good for the country because that's investments," he said.

But Carlyle has no investments in the country, he said. The $4-million infrastructure project in Basilan under Balikatan 02-1 was also too small for a group as big as Carlyle, he added.

"What is a $4-million construction program (for them)? Anybody can do that," he said.

Gloria chides Burnham pa for cutting deal with Abus

By Dona Pazzibugan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday chided Paul Burnham, the father of kidnapped American missionary Martin Burnham, for negotiating ransom with the Abu Sayyaf.

She said Paul Burnham had only himself to blame for the failure of the plan to release his son, Gracia Burnham and Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap because he did not listen to the government's warnings.

Ms Macapagal said the Burnham family negotiated on its own without the consent of the government, which has a no-ransom policy.

"I'm sorry to say (this) because their son is still in captivity. They complain that the Abu Sayyaf did not keep their word. I'd like to tell them that they were the ones who decided to negotiate anyway," she said in her weekly radio interview.

"We've told them not to (negotiate) because the bandits are really like that, you can't trust their word," she said.

The Abu Sayyaf bandits who have been holding the three hostages for almost a year have denied receiving a hefty ransom for their release. "We deny the statement . . . that they gave us $300,000," Abu Sabaya, the Abu Sayyaf spokesperson, said in a telephone call to the Radio Mindanao Network on Sunday.

With a report from Reuters

Sabaya 'welcomes' US troops

From page A1

holding two hostages from a superpower, yet they could not get us. I hope the US and Philippine governments will do something for the diplomatic and peaceful solution of this crisis," Sabaya said.

"It's embarrassing for the Philippine government because the US hostages (have been) with us for 11 months now," Sabaya added.

"It's really an embarrassment because the superpower can't do anything to us. What I can say to the US government and the US troops (deployed in Basilan) is, Welcome to the party."

Sabaya's message was broadcast a day after the US Joint Chiefs of Staff chair, Gen. Richard Myers, visited Basilan and announced that the joint campaign, which includes US training of Filipino troops pursuing the Abu Sayyaf bandits, was "a success so far."

Sabaya, also known as Aldam Tilao, called the station twice on Sunday, but station manager Rey Bayogin said only one call was taped and broadcast yesterday.

Still alive

Sabaya also took the opportunity to deny military reports he was seriously ill. "I'm still alive and kicking," Sabaya said.

Playing coy, the bandit leader also refused to comment on claims that the Abu Sayyaf was responsible for a series of bomb explosions in Gen. Santos City last week in which 15 people were killed and scores wounded.

"I won't say yes and I won't say no. It's up to the Philippine government to analyze," Sabaya said.

He also offered authorities one last chance to strike a deal with his group for the release of the three hostages still in their custody: American missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham and Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap. But he dictated the terms, saying he would only talk with the Philippine and US governments.

"(Some) people are trying to keep in touch with us, but I think it should be the governments, the US and the Philippines, who should make the negotiations," Sabaya told anchorwoman Jenny Sanson.

"Negotiate with us directly, this is the last (time) we (will) open a deal for negotiation," Sabaya said, this time in Chavacano.

Sabaya said the government should name Presidential Adviser for Special Concerns Norberto Gonzales, Gov. Parouk Hussin of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and Malaysian officials Sairin Karno and Yusof Hamdan as part of the negotiating team.

Gonzales was the man behind the release of Italian priest Giuseppe Pierantoni, while Karno figured prominently during the Sipadan hostage negotiation.

"I hope the Philippine government and US government will do something for the hostages' release and end this crisis," Sabaya said.

Sabaya also denied reports the bandit group had struck a $300,000 deal with the Burnham family. Last week, the family said they had made a deal with the bandits to release the couple but that the Abu Sayyaf reneged. They hinted at, but did not explicitly mention, a ransom.

But officials in Washington have said that $300,000 in privately raised money was handed over to a representative of the guerrillas.

The military warned negotiators not to give in to any financial demand from the bandit group, saying those who paid in the past have contributed to the Abu Sayyaf's transformation into a monster.

Maj. Gen. Glicerio Sua, chief of Task Force Comet, said: "The bandits will use the ransom money to buy weapons and start shooting my soldiers. In that sense, I am not happy."

Lt. Col. Danilo Servando, spokesperson for the military's Southern Command, said an ongoing operation against the guerrillas would not be affected.

"The policy still holds that we will not entertain any ransom or any negotiations unless it is about the unconditional surrender of the Abu Sayyaf and the release of the remaining hostages," he said.

With reports from AP, AFP and Reuters

Israel practicing apartheid, says Bishop Tutu

LONDON—South Africa's Archbishop Desmond Tutu has accused the Israelis of treating Palestinians in the same way the apartheid South African government treated blacks.

"I've been deeply distressed in my visit to the Holy Land; it reminded me so much of what happened to us black people in South Africa," Tutu said during a conference this month in Boston, Massachusetts. The Guardian published extracts of the conference as a commentary under the headline "Apartheid in the Holy Land" on Monday.

"I have seen the humiliation of the Palestinians at checkpoints and roadblocks, suffering like us when young white police officers prevented us from moving about," said the archbishop, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984.

"I say, why are our memories so short?," he added. "Have our Jewish sisters and brothers forgotten their humiliation? Have they forgotten the collective punishment, the home demolitions, in their own history so soon? If peace could come to South Africa, surely it can come to the Holy Land?"

The archbishop went on: "You know as well as I do that, somehow, the Israeli government is placed on a pedestal (in the United States) and to criticize it is to be immediately dubbed anti-Semitic, as if Palestinians were not Semitic.

"People are scared in this country (the United States), to say wrong is wrong because the Jewish lobby is powerful—very powerful. Well, so what?

AFP

Arafat office siege nears end

From page A1

during the crushing Israeli offensive that started on March 29 and began winding down last week.

The Israeli army said it was searching for suspects, arms and explosives in Hebron following Palestinian attacks launched from the city such as one that killed four Israelis, including a 5-year-old girl, at a nearby Jewish settlement on Saturday.

But there was no intent to undermine Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority, the army said in a statement.

The Hebron raid occurred as a month-long siege of Arafat's West Bank headquarters appeared to be nearing an end, with US President George W. Bush's proposal to send US and British wardens to guard six wanted people accepted by both sides.

But Israel dug in its heels over a UN fact-finding mission to the Jenin refugee camp, and talks with Palestinians failed to end a standoff at Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity.

Bush said the deal to end Arafat's siege marked "a hopeful day for the region."

The proposal calls for Israeli forces to leave Arafat's compound in the city of Ramallah and let him travel anywhere once six people, including four involved in the assassination of an Israeli Cabinet minister, are moved to a Palestinian prison where they will be guarded by the US and British wardens.

"Chairman Arafat is now free to move around and free to lead, and we expect him to do so," Bush told reporters at his ranch. "Mr. Arafat must perform. Mr. Arafat must do his job (by halting Palestinian attacks on Israelis). He must earn my respect by leading."

Bush called Israel's acceptance of his compromise "helpful and constructive." The White House said Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon would visit the United States soon for talks with Bush.

Witnesses said tanks and armored vehicles, supported by helicopter gunships, entered Hebron from two directions before dawn, killing at least seven people and wounding several others.

The army said troops had come under Palestinian fire but had not sustained casualties.

"The army launched an operation in the city focusing on the arrest of terrorists and searches for munitions. This operation is expected to end shortly and is not intended as a strike against the Palestinian Authority," an army statement said.

It said gunmen from the militant group Hamas who had killed four Israelis in nearby Adora settlement on Saturday had originated in Hebron, and that there was advance intelligence of other attacks being planned there.

'Brutal' pressure

In Jerusalem, Israel's media agreed Sunday that Sharon buckled under "brutal" US pressure in accepting the US proposal.

Some suggested that Sharon's agreement was a swap for Washington's tacit backing of Israel's decision not to cooperate with a UN inquiry into an alleged massacre that Palestinians accuse his troops of committing in the Jenin refugee camp.

"Sharon chose the lesser of two evils," the public Channel 1 television station said in its evening news report. "Yasser Arafat's siege is less important than the Jenin mission because Sharon does not want Israeli soldiers to be subjected to an international trial."

"We didn't have a choice," said Israeli Defense Minister Binyamin Ben Eliezer. "We cannot afford to have a conflict with the Americans when we need their support on the Jenin mission."

Some government officials attempted to put a brave face on the Arafat deal and suggested that it worked in both sides' favor.

"I think that we isolated Arafat as long as was necessary for us to achieve our military goals," Israeli Communications Minister Reuven Rivlin told reporters. "Arafat will still need Israeli permission to leave the territories just as he did before the war."

But private station Channel 2 reported Sharon as telling his government that his decision to agree on the Arafat deal was very difficult for him personally to accept.

Sharon is further reported as telling his ministers at the closed-door session that Israel no longer had a choice.

Channel 2 reported that US National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice telephoned Sharon during the meeting to inform him that "the strategic interests of America—and by inference Israel—were at stake."

At the United Nations, a frustrated Security Council gave UN Secretary General Kofi Annan one more day on Sunday to resolve an embarrassing impasse with Israel over his fact-finding mission to Jenin.

Annan sought the additional day to try to overcome fresh Israeli objections to the mission's ground rules that resulted in the Israeli cabinet complaining that conditions were "not yet right" for it to proceed on Sunday, as planned.

It was the third such delay sought by Israel since Annan announced the mission on April 19, after Israel welcomed it. The mission team remained on hold in Geneva, awaiting a green light from headquarters.

"The secretary general's priority is to get the fact-finding mission on the ground as soon as possible," Kieran Prendergast, UN undersecretary general for political affairs, told reporters after briefing the council behind closed doors on Annan's efforts.

"The council is very frustrated with the delays but supportive of the secretary general's efforts," he said.

The refugee camp was the scene of the fiercest fighting in Israel's West Bank offensive.

Palestinians charge that a massacre took place there, with an unknown number of civilians killed. Israel denies this, saying it lost 23 soldiers while at the most 50 Palestinian fighters and civilians were killed.

Reuters, AFP

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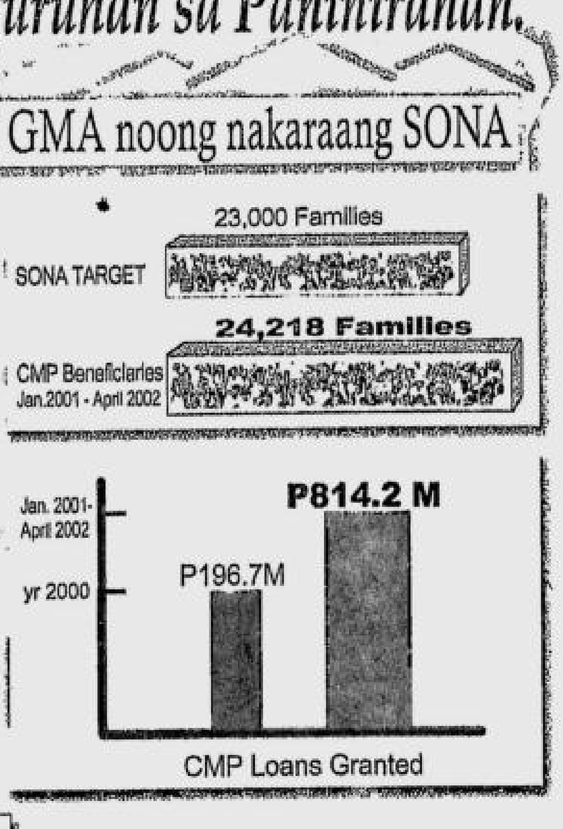

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Buhain: Carrion issue doesn't worry me

CHAIR Eric Buhain of the Philippine Sports Commission said yesterday the oust-Cynthia Carrion movement initiated by the PSC board is "the least of my worries and should not turn off corporate sponsors." He said athletes training for the Busan Asian Games are "isolated and insulated" from the latest controversy bugging the agency.

M.A. Reyes

SPORTS

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ◎ Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

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Garma deals Torre 2nd straight loss, shares nat'l chess lead

TORRE

STANDINGS AFTER FOUR ROUNDS

Men's: Gomez, Paragua, Garma 3 points; Mariano, Antonio, Roca 2.5; Villamayor, Sanchez, Bancod 2; Torre, Milagrosa, Nadera, Barbosa, Sumngat 1.5; Merelos 1; Ranola .5.

Women's: Castellano 3.5 points; Lomibao, Mariano, Mendoza 3; Espallardo, Cua, Torres, Joya 2; Dela Castro, Toledo 1.

INTERNATIONAL Master Chito Garma is having the time of his life. And Grandmaster Eugene Torre is having problems.

Garma, a two-time Olympian, dealt Torre his second straight loss to climb into a tie for the lead with two players young enough to be his kid brothers, in another day of reversal in the grand finals of the National Chess Championship at the 17th floor (Penthouse) of the All Asia Capital Center in Paseo De Roxas, Makati City.

A day after a stunning defeat to untitled finalist Melvin Merelos in 39 moves in the third round, Torre still failed to return to form, succumbing to Garma in 44 moves of a Modern Defense. The loss sent Torre crashing near the bottom with 1.5 points going into the fifth round of the tournament organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines and hosted by Lex Development Corp.

Keeping pace with Garma at the top of the 16-man field are 15-year-old NM John Paul Gomez and 18-year-old IM Mark Paragua, who also had three points each.

Gomez, a two-time national junior champion, topped IM Barlo Nadera in 44 moves of a Queen's Gambit Exchange, while Paragua downed NM Oliver Barbosa in 53 of a Closed Sicilian.

Still reeling from his loss to the unheralded Merelos, Torre again encountered stormy sailing in another complicated skirmish at the middle. Garma then gave up a pawn to open up things. A pin on the knight forced Torre to give up his knight and bishop against Garma's rook.

With three points across his name, Garma, who topped the 11-round semifinal round, still refused to be confident about his chances.

"*Medyo malayo pa.* Round by round *pa rin tayo. Dapat kasi dito sa round robin, umiskor ka,* either by a win or a draw. *Kasi habang tumataas ka, bumababa naman yung kalaban mo*," said Garma.

Also gaining ground after four rounds were Nelson Mariano II, who momentarily stopped Merelos' giant-killing tendency via a 30-move win. Mariano now has 2.5 points in a tie with GM Joey Antonio and NM Petronio Roca.

In the women's finals, WNM Christine Castellano continues to lead the field with 3.5 points following a win over Daisy Rivera in the fourth round.

MBA slates triple-bill in 2 venues

By Roy Luarca

FIRST CONFERENCE

North	W	L
Olongapo	4	2
LBC Batangas	3	2
O. Pangasinan	3	3
Pampanga	1	6
South	**W**	**L**
Cebuana L.	5	1
RCPI Negros	5	2
P. Davao	4	3
Casino CDO	1	7

GAMES TODAY

(Olongapo Convention)

3 p.m.—Pampanga vs Osaka Pangasinan

6 p.m.—Olongapo vs Cebuana Lhuillier

(Davao Oriental Sports and Cultural Center)

5 p.m.—Batangas vs Professional Davao

THE MBA goes to Mati, Davao Oriental for the first time when LBC Batangas tackles Professional Davao at 5 p.m. today in the 7,000-seat Davao Oriental Sports and Cultural Center (Dosco).

Also slated in the 3-game bill in two venues are the 3 p.m. tussle between Pampanga and Osaka Pangasinan and the 6 p.m. encounter between Olongapo and Cebuana Lhuillier.

The Olongapo-Cebuana Lhuillier tussle should be a thriller as the Volunteers pace the Northern Conference with a 4-2 card, while the Gems are lording it over in the Southern Conference at 5-1.

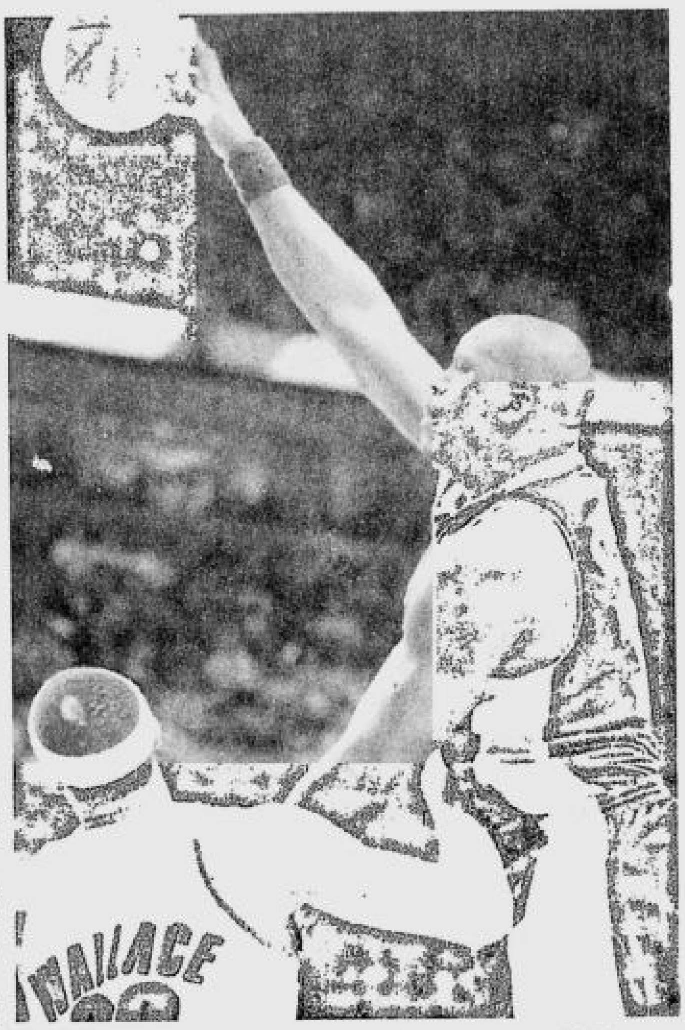
Olongapo coach Junel Baculi will again call on Fil-Am Jeffrey Flowers, the league's leading rebounder, Brixter Encarnacion and Henry Fernandez as the Volunteers try to bolster their bid for a semifinals seat.

High-flying Bruce Dacia, Stephen Padilla and Jercules Tangkay will again be the key men for Cebuana Lhuillier mentor Francis Rodriguez. Focus, however, will be on Gems rookie Marc Pingris, who'll have the tough task of defending against Flowers.

The LBC Batangas-Professional Davao encounter also promises to be exciting as both teams are on an upswing. The Blades have won their last three games to jump to 3-2, while the Eagles are at 4-3 following an 87-77 stunner over the RCPI Negros Slashers on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Jeffrey Sanders was named the MBA Hardcourt Hero for the period April 22-27 after leading the Blades to victories over the Pampanga Stars, 78-77, and the Casino Cagayan de Oro Amigos, 80-77, respectively.

The 6-foot-3 Sanders, a product of the Technological Institute of the Philippines Rangers, averaged 25.5 points and hit 11 triples in those victories as he stepped up in the absence of Alex Compton.



O'NEAL (right) scoring against Portland's Wallace. LA won, 92-91. AP

Horry trey ousts Portland

PORTLAND, Oregon — Robert Horry made a 3-pointer with 2.1 seconds left to cap a furious last-minute comeback, and Los Angeles completed a three-game sweep of the Trail Blazers.

The Blazers, who have lost seven straight playoff games to the Lakers dating to Game 7 of the 2000 Western Conference finals, appeared to have the game won after Rasheed Wallace made one of two free throws to give Portland a 90-86 lead with 17.1 seconds left.

In Philadelphia, Allen Iverson scored 42 points, including 11 of his team's last 15, as the 76ers avoided elimination Sunday with a 108-103 victory over the Boston Celtics.

In Minneapolis, Dirk Nowitzki scored 28 of his 39 points before halftime and Finley had 13 of his 30 in the third quarter, helping the Dallas Mavericks hold off the Minnesota Timberwolves and finish a three-game sweep. *AP*

La Salle outshines Kutitap

By Dennis U. Eroa

PLAYMAKER Mike Cortez played wondrously as ICTSI-La Salle took the sparkle out of Kutitap, 82-75, yesterday in the PBL Chairman's Cup before a sizeable crowd at the Pasig Sports Center.

The six-footer Cortez, whose woeful performance was blamed for ICTSI-La Salle's 63-75 setback to archrival Ateneo-Hapee-Negros Navigation last Wednesday, bounced back in style, exploding with 33 points, including five triples, on top of six assists and five rebounds. He had four points, all in the first quarter against the Blue Eagles.

Cortez capped his all-around show by dropping a clever pass to forward Dominic Uy in the final 13 seconds after bouncing the inbound to the back of an unsuspecting Kutitap defender Gerard Jones. Uy easily scored with an undergoal stab, 79-74, icing the Green Archers fifth win in seven games, same record of the Sparklers.

ICTSI easily solved Kutitap's full-court, trapping defense as it surged to a 14-point lead, 24-10 early in the fourth period.

Challenging every shots and with Cortez ruling the backcourt, the Green Archers continued to dominate, 40-32, at the half.

Cyrus Baguio, Allan Salangsang and Nino Gelig struggled in the early goings as the Green Archers clamped down on defense. As Baguio and company failed to find their shots, it was fearless Saquilayan who tried to put Kutitap in the thick of the fight.

Saquilayan had four straight points as Kutitap came closer, 74-77, but Cortez came to ICTSI's rescue with that gem of a play.

SCORES:

ICTSI-La Salle 82—Cortez 33, Magsumbol 11, Wilson 6, Uy 6, yap 5, Cuan 5, Omolon 4, Ramos 3, Zamora 3, Franco 2, Sta. Maria 2, Daep 2.

KUTITAP 75—Baguio 14, Saquilayan 13, Salangsang 12, Mercado 9, Jones 9, Gelig 6, Rivera 6, Mallari 2, Espiritu 1, Catli 0.

Quarters: 26-13, 40-32, 63-55, 82-75

Rookie jitters

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

I LOST my first fight with a dorado. No alibis. I lost fair and square.

A dorado is tough. Found mostly in the Pacific Ocean, dorado is one of the costliest fish in Hawaii. In the United States, it's a premium fish. It's almost as expensive as rock lobster or Angus beef.

"It's one of the most delicious in the world," said Vic Vic Villavicencio of dorado. "It's one of my favorites, really."

In my first encounter with a dorado, I was knocked down cold. After it had bitten the bait, my dorado fought back fiercely. It didn't take two minutes before I lost the bout. I guess after the debacle, San Vicente, a scenic patch of Pacific Ocean water off Sta. Ana in Cagayan, laughed at me.

"Welcome to trawling, the ultimate in sport fishing," said Rey Buencamino, president of the Philippine Game Fishing Foundation. Rey is presently defending his angler of the year title.

Before surrendering, my right arm hardened, my left shoulder grew stiff, my knees weakened. It was as if the rod and reel had caved in on me.

Sol Juvida, that eagle-eyed professor of literary journalism at UP-Diliman who was with us in the 30-foot banca, asked: "How heavy was the fish?"

It weighed like a sack of rice (50 kilos).

Rey laughed. My dorado maybe weighed only seven kilos.

"You weren't relaxed," said Rey, my teacher at sea. "You were very tense."

Right he was.

I wasn't breathing normally. I wasn't focused. I didn't have the right frame of mind. I charged it to rookie jitters.

When I went back the next morning to fish again, it was with a vengeance.

That should be a story worth telling.

Just hang in there.

***

PUBLIC SERVICE. Jun Velasco of the Bulletin who edits the NPC Digest of the National Press Club, called to say he is running for NPC director. I will vote for him on May 5 not because he is my *kumpadre* but because he has an excellent record of community leadership; he has been a topnotch, multi-awarded community journalist for almost three decades now. His being an activist during martial law has made him a reasonable and a principled person. Poets are like that because Jun, like his brother Dante, is also a poet of note. The NPC will benefit from him.

Not only my fellow journalist Jing Cardinoza has invited me to the Dagupan Pistay's Dayat celebration tomorrow but also that humble businessman Charlie Ngo and my high schoolmate Teody Lalas. Charlie, the amiable owner of the spic and span Star Plaza Hotel, said Dagupan would bid for the Guinness World Record of producing the longest array of grilled fish—about 1,000 bangus. The grilling starts at 6 p.m. today along A.B. Fernandez Avenue in Dagupan City. I really don't know what to do as I have pressing commitments in Manila. Let's just keep our fingers crossed, buddies?

Many thanks for remembering, anyways. And yes, let's go for the record, fellas.

Mandaluyong derby tonight

THE FIERCE battle for Ucap's Cocker of the Year 2002 race intensifies when the "10th Ucap R and B Farm 7-Cock Derby" gets going at Mandaluyong Coliseum today. Sponsors are Sagupaan Super Feeds and Washout Shampoo.

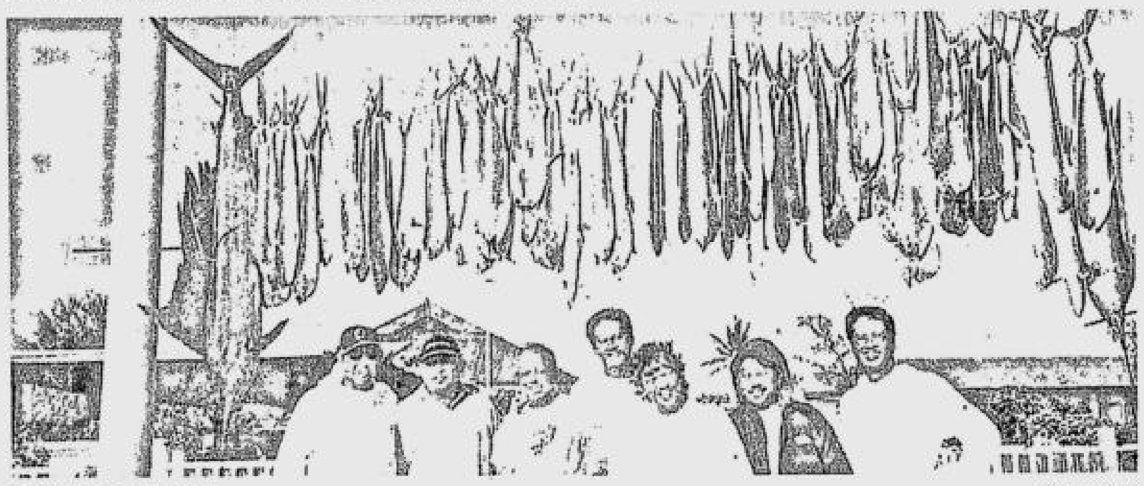
So far, the top 10 frontrunners are *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio (Sagupaan Hammer, 55 points); Benjie Lim and Wacky Salud (Hammer Jr., 47); Pol Estrellado (PE San Pablo, 46); engineer Sonny Lagon and Mayor Joel Brillantes (Blue Blade JBB, 45); OPMI president Vic Yu (King Boxer, 41.5); V. Yu (Sir Vincent, 38.5); Raymond Velayo (Arnis Master, 37); ambassador Danding Cojuangco (Bumble Bee Balbina, 36); partners Biboy Enriquez and Mauro Prieto (Firebird MB, 35), Ucap president Butch Macasaet (BJ Greenwood, 34.5) and Boy de Roca (BL Jojit, 34.5).

Today's hosts are Rep. Claude Bautista of Davao del Sur and veteran gamefowl specialist Boyboy Roa of Cagayan de Oro.

For inquiries, please contact 531-4403, 531-4405, 534-4110 and 535-2341.

Meanwhile, Mayor Gerry "Boy" Espina of Naval, Biliran Province banners the participants in the upcoming "Ucap 7-Cock Derby" on May 7 and 9, also at Mandaluyong Coliseum.

Espina is co-host of the derby with Patrick Puno, Alan Tan, John Capinpin, Larry Amante and Madlambayan brothers.



SOL JUVIDA

BOUNTY OF THE SEA

Six competitors during the Triple V Invitational Media Tournament caught a total of 70 game fish—66 dorados, two sail fish, one wahoo and one baracuda—in San Vicente off the coast of Sta. Ana, Cagayan, last weekend. Jake Ayson (extreme left) and partner Benjie Toda won with the heaviest catch of 114.3 kilos during the two-day fishfest sponsored by Triple V's Vic Vic Villavicencio. Lito Tacujan (second from right) and David Gonzales finished second with 89.7 kilos and Rey Bancod (second from left) and Cholo Santos third with 85.8. Other finishers were Ding Marcelo (third from left) who was paired with Benedict Lim, Al S. Mendoza (fourth from left) and Rey Buencamino and Jun Engracia (extreme right) and Alfredo "Pidok" Herula. Bancod landed the heaviest single catch—a 41.3-kilo sailfish—on the second day after failing to catch a single fish on opening day. Virgil Villavicencio (middle) was the tournament coordinator.

₱5.3M for Coo

BOWLING legend Bong Coo is the biggest winner when President Arroyo starts handing out cash incentives to 356 retired athletes and coaches on May 16, garnering a whooping P5.3 million in rewards for her past achievements.

This was revealed by Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain yesterday even as he announced that P40 million will be given away to past achievers during a ceremony at the Manila Hotel. Coo won the 1979 Bangkok World Cup and placed fourth in the New York World Cup in 1981. She also has other international titles including Asian Championships.

M.A. Reyes

Borromeo, Yango to hold dancesport workshop

VETERAN internationalist Edgar Borromeo and Ana Yango of the Dancesport Council of the Philippines will conduct a three-week free workshop from May 13 to 31 at the Dancesport Training Center at the Philsport Complex (formerly Ultra) in Pasig City. The sessions will be held from 10 a.m. to 12 noon from Monday to Saturday.

Open to kids and adults, especially beginners from the provinces, the pioneering project aims to teach the basic techniques of dancesport, said council president Becky Garcia. All DSCP chapters and affiliates are also requested to send their participants to the summer workshops where the council has arranged with the Philippine Sports Commission for free board and lodging at the Ultra for out-of-town participants on a first come, first served basis. The deadline for out-of-towners is April 30. For details, call Cheryl Delos Reyes at 635-0116, Rubie at 752-0435 or visit the Dancesport Training Center between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. from Monday to Saturday. Registration is now ongoing.

Nissan Exalta back to the Visayas

CATBALOGAN, Western Samar—Barely a week to go before the Nissan Exalta GS Superior concludes its 30-day, non-stop run across the country, Juvy Catajoy brought the car back to the Visayas Sunday.

Earlier, the Exalta toured Central Luzon and the Ilocos provinces.

The Exalta Caltex Havoline odometer reading is now 25,004 kilometers after Catajoy, Denny Riel and Lester Susi endured heavy traffic on their way to Mindanao by way of Lipata.

In the town of Guiuan—the site of an airport dealing with emergency landings—the crew made a pit stop for a light meal before going back to the road again and put the 1.6 liter, 116-horsepower Exalta to another round of torture tests.

The sparkling silver sedan with a set of safety features unrivalled by the other brands in the 16-cc category is expected to hike its kilometer reading in Mindanao on Monday.

Coseteng, Mendiola of Caltex top SVI Grand Prix

SUBIC—The Caltex Havoline Racing Team continued its streak of successes as lead driver Jody Coseteng and Peewee Mendiola pulled amazing victories anew in the SVI Subic Grand Prix yesterday at the newly upgraded Subic International Raceway here.

Coseteng, the three-time Philippine National Touring Car champion carrying the colors of Caltex-Globe Telecom, again swept both races in the SVI Super Saloon Series for his fourth consecutive victory.

Mendiola, the Caltex-Beefeater rookie driver, outlasted newcomer Johnny Sambo and lady driver Gaby de la Merced in the morning race for his third straight triumph in the Novice division of the SVI Challenge Cup.

Women's cage league opens May 7 in Naga

IT'S all systems go for the opening of the Women's National Basketball League on May 7 in Naga City.

"Sports fans in the city are eagerly awaiting to see Filipino women display their talent in the country's favorite ball game," said Naga City councilor and Basketball Association of the Philippines deputy secretary general Julian "Jun" Lavadia Jr.

Supporters of the tournament are Healthy Options, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Uratex Foam, Burlington Socks and YKL Color Films.

Lavadia, also the BAP regional director for Bicol (Region V), is responsible for bringing the WNBL first round to Naga City.

Organized by the WNBL under its president Jean Monteverde and the BAP headed by Quinteliano Literal, the five-day, 15-game tournament is hosted by the Naga City Sports Council, headed by overall chair Pedro Lee.

PSC chair Eric Buhain and commissioners Cynthia Carrion and William Ramirez lead the guests.

Teams entered are the Pangasinan Summers, Laguna Charmers, Cebu Queen, Davao Pearls, Zamboanga Flowers and the hosts Bicol Beauties.

The Pangasinan Summers have Tony Yap of Simco Traders as their team manager while the Laguna Charmers will be managed by Jimmy Dela Cruz of Jumbo Plastics.

Alvin Tai Lian of Bestank is the team manager for the Bicol Beauties while the Cebu Queens are owned by Philip Tan Lee.

Beermen tackle Aces tonight

GAMES TODAY *(Cuneta Astrodome)*
6 p.m.—Purefoods vs Coca-Cola
8 p.m.—Alaska vs San Miguel

By June Navarro

AFTER overthrowing Talk N Text from its lofty perch, San Miguel Beer targets a similar task against Alaska when the semifinals of the PBA Samsung Governors Cup kicks off today at the Cuneta Astrodome.

The Beermen, however, will have to start buckling down to work in the 8 p.m. meeting and do the trick thrice if they plan to beat the Aces in their best-of-five semifinal clash.

Coca-Cola and Purefoods, high-ranking squads which downed their nemesis in the quarterfinals, collide in the other semifinal thriller beginning at 6 p.m.

Going by the figures and the outcome of these teams' respective head-to-head encounter in the eliminations, the Tigers and the Aces should be the wise-money bets.

The Tigers, behind a pair of prolific imports in Ron Hale and Roselle Ellis, routed Purefoods, 89-69, nearly two months ago while the Aces toyed with the Beermen, 74-58, at the end of the regular wars last week.

But as basketball pundits love to say, numbers and statistics don't count anymore in the playoffs, a belief proven by the Beermen against the top-seeded Talk N Text Phone Pals on Sunday.

Adamson paces Group A of Fr. Martin Cup

ADAMSON University crushed University of Northern Philippines, 87-71, at the UE gym Sunday to post its third straight victory in the 8th Fr. Martin Cup basketball tournament.

The Falcons also subdued Ateneo A, 91-85, last Thursday to show the way in Group A of the 22-team senior division.

Defending champion FEU A, Mapua Tech, University of Santo Tomas, College of St. Benilde, San Sebastian and San Beda A are the other undefeated teams so far in the tourney supported by Pagcor.

FEU A crushed Jose Rizal, 88-74, and Arellano University, 103-75, to share the Group B lead with UST and St. Benilde. UST toppled Ateneo B, 87-56, and University of Assumption, 88-79, while St. Benilde beat Assumption, 73-70, and Jose Rizal, 78-73.

The SSC Stags routed UE, 68-44, to pace Group C, while Mapua crushed San Beda, 68-50, for its first win in Group A.

In other senior matches, NU nipped FEU B, 88-85; UP subdued Letran, 73-65; PCU whipped Angelicum, 83-56; Letran ripped University of Northern Philippines, 77-54; FEU B tripped TIP, 85-73; and Angelicum nosed out NU, 56-53.

AP

STILL CHAMP

Andy Roddick returns a shot during the first set against Pete Sampras in the finals of the US Clay Court Championships Sunday in Houston. Roddick won, 7-6 (9), 6-3, to retain his title.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, Robert Pactolerin closed with an even par 72 to rule the Tucor-Villamor Open at the Villamor course. Also today in 1990, Joey Almeda raced to a winning time of 47.01 to win the Shell TMO slalom series in Baguio City.

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Sison stuns Estrada

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—Former Davis Cupper Beeyong Sison scored a 6-1, 6-1 victory over No. 15 Gilbert Estrada Sunday night to reach the men's singles second round of the first Coca-Cola National Tennis Championships at the New Subic Bay International Tennis Center here.

Fourth seed Michael Mora III and fifth pick Rolando Ruel Jr. pulled off contrasting wins to also earn second-round slots.

Mora, who delivered the Philippines' lone victory in the Davis Cup tie against Kazakhstan last February, stamped his class over Macoy Gino, 6-0, 6-3, to advance against Arnel Dela Cruz, who struggled past Junjie Guadayo, 7-6 (4), 6-0.

Ruel, who played for the RP Davis Cup team last year, fought back from a first-set loss to prevail over Chemiel Mantua, 2-6, 6-3, 6-1, and advance against UST coach Karl Santamaria, a 6-4, 6-0 winner over Melvin Artates Sy.

SPORTSWATCH

Buenviaje reaches q'finals

THIRD seed Anna Buenviaje outplayed Ira Bautista, 6-0, 6-2, yesterday to reach the girls' 14-under quarterfinals of the Enervon Tablet International Age Group Tennis Challenge at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Buenviaje will meet sixth-ranked Jin Quirubin, who scored a 6-1, 7-6 (0) victory over Jessica Occena. Earlier, top seed Melissa Orteza demolished Kristel Co, 6-0, 6-0, to advance against Macy Solon while No. 2 Julie Em Botor blasted Isobelle Culaba, 6-1, 6-0, to advance against Macy Serrano.

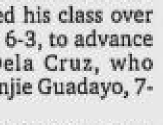
Belgium advances; US eliminated

NEW YORK—World No. 8 Justine Henin put Belgium on track for a repeat performance at the Fed Cup, beating Alicia Molik of Australia 6-2, 6-1 Sunday to clinch the tie 3-1 and send her team into the World Group's quarterfinals. In other matches, Austria eliminated 17-time winner the United States 3-2; Slovakia nipped Switzerland 3-2 after winning the final doubles match; Croatia did the same to the Czech Republic; Italy shut out Sweden 5-0; Germany slipped by Russia 3-2; France downed Argentina 3-2; and Spain overcame a first-match loss to beat Hungary 4-1. *AP*

Capriati's dismissal led to defeat

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina—Kicking Jennifer Capriati off the Fed Cup team cost the United States a chance at the title and led to an embarrassing 3-2 first-round defeat to Austria. The Americans, winners of a record 17 titles, were eliminated Sunday when Barbara Schwartz upset Fed Cup rookie Meghann Shaughnessy, the fill-in at No. 1 singles following Capriati's ouster for breaking a team rule prohibiting her from practicing on her own. AP

Mediate wins 5th PGA title



ROCCO

GREENSBORO, North Carolina —Rocco Mediate, holding his nerves together while battling 50 kph (30 mph) wind gusts, shot a 1-under 71 on Sunday for a three-stroke victory over Mark Calcavecchia in the Greater Greensboro Chrysler Classic. Mediate finished with a 16-under 272 total for his fifth victory on the PGA Tour and first since the 2000 Buick Open. He also won at Forest Oaks Country Club in 1993, beating Steve Elkington in a playoff. The $ 684,000 top prize jumps Mediate's 2002 earnings to $ 1.487 million and from 21st to sixth on the money list. His total is a career high, topping last year's $ 1.474 million. *AP*

Schumacher wins again

BARCELONA, Spain—Michael Schumacher's 57th career victory Sunday in the Spanish Grand Prix was as easy as it gets. Schumacher led from pole to finish, pulling away consistently at one second per lap on the high-speed turns over the Circuit de Catalunya. It was his fourth victory in five this year, and the four-time world champion could have lapped the field. Instead, he slowed and relaxed to watch the action at the back.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA Playoffs, First Round Detroit Pistons vs Toronto Raptors at 8 a.m. (r – 7:30 p.m.) on Star Sports

GOLF: PGA Greater Greensboro Chrysler Classic, Second Round at 2 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

Golfglobe 2002 at 9:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

SOCCER: Asian Cup Winners Cup 2002 Final at 9:30 a.m. on Star Sports English Premier Football League at 12 noon (r), Highlights at 6 p.m. on Star Sports

BOWLING: CGU Asian Bowling Tour, Malaysia Men's Highlights at 11 a.m. (r) on ESPN

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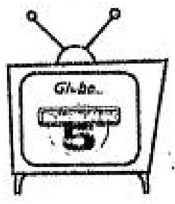
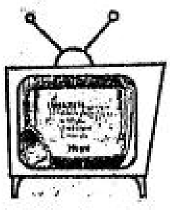
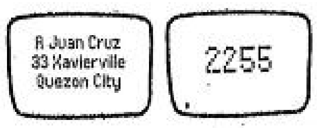


STEP 3
Watch out for the Missing Lyric Question.



STEP 4
Text in your answer, along with your name and address to 2255. Every time you text in the correct answer, you earn another raffle point.



STEP 5
Keep on texting! The more you text, the better your chances of winning!

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a) try b) cry c) fly d) smile

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Editor **Louie C. Camino**

BENEDICTO

- **Bail for ex-child star** /A24
- **Labor groups seek 'pro-poor government'** /24
- **On Target: Framed up by anti-narcotics cop (Part II)** /A24

MMDA not ready to junk trash deal

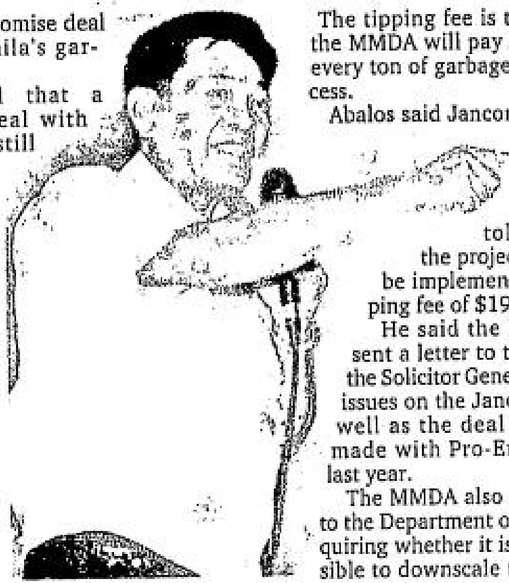
By Alcuin Papa

THE JANCOM garbage deal seems unlikely to die as the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority announced yesterday that it is working out a solution to the problems hounding the garbage firm, including President Macapagal-Arroyo's refusal to sign the $350 million Jancom garbage contract.

In a news conference yesterday, MMDA Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said he was not ready to trash the contract or the involvement of Jancom in any plans that could help solve Metro Manila's garbage problem.

Reacting to President Macapagal-Arroyo's statements that she will not sign the Jancom contract because it was "flawed," Abalos said, "I don't think that's what the President meant. I think she means 'no more' as far as the contract is concerned."

He said he would talk to Jancom and its rival Pro-Environment and try to negotiate a compromise deal for Metro Manila's garbage.



ABALOS

He insisted that a downscaled deal with Jancom was still possible with the company doing away with the incinerator component of the contract and a reduction of its tipping fee from $32 to about $19 for every ton of garbage.

"If it is possible for a landfill (to be constructed), why can't we talk about it especially if the price is within the parameters of $19 (per ton of garbage)," Abalos said. "At $32, even I will object to that."

The tipping fee is the amount the MMDA will pay Jancom for every ton of garbage it will process.

Abalos said Jancom president Leonides Gonzales told him that the project could still be implemented at a tipping fee of $19.

He said the MMDA had sent a letter to the Office of the Solicitor General to clarify issues on the Jancom deal, as well as the deal the MMDA made with Pro-Environment last year.

The MMDA also sent a letter to the Department of Justice "inquiring whether it is legally possible to downscale the project," Abalos said.

"We would like to know if other proponents with other technologies can still be accommodated if we push through with Jancom," Abalos said.

He said that since the Supreme Court ruled on the Jancom contract with finality two weeks ago, the deal was "valid and perfected" and could be implemented if signed by the President. He said he would seek an opinion on where Pro-Environment now stands.

"With that decision, there is now no basis for the award (of the contract) to Pro-Environment since the decision said other acts by any of the parties in entering into another contract are nullified," Abalos said.

He again rejected calls for a re-bid of the garbage project, saying "obligations and rights" between Jancom and the MMDA have been established.

"It's not that simple," he said. "They would be entitled to damages. We can't extricate (ourselves) from this without paying the corresponding damages. And that is what I am trying to avoid."

He said he will call officials of Jancom and Pro-Environment to a meeting, together with the National Economic Development Authority (Neda) to compare the offers of both companies. "Let's see if they are offering the same delicious apple and at what price," he said. "I will ask Jancom why they can't give the project at $18.90."

Cop killed in shootout

By Agnes E. Donato

A POLICE officer was killed while another was injured in a shootout with three suspected robbers under the Edsa-Quezon Avenue flyover yesterday morning.

SPO1 Erwin Barredo, of the PNP Traffic Management Group, succumbed to three gunshot wounds in the body while he was being treated at the East Avenue Medical Center.

His colleague, SPO4 Benjamin Paulo, was shot in the cheek. He was taken to the Capitol Medical Center for treatment.

Investigation showed that the three men, armed with .45-caliber pistols and M16 Armalite rifles, robbed one Sheila Escupido of P300,000 in Valenzuela at about 9 a.m.

The suspects used in their getaway a metallic green Polo Classic Volkswagen (UFT 214), police said. They later ditched the Volkswagen somewhere in Project 6, Quezon City, and boarded a maroon Toyota Revo (WHL 474), police said.

At about 10:30 a.m., TMG members spotted the odd-looking sticker on the license plates of the getaway Revo and alerted pursuing policemen, who caught up with the suspects under the Edsa-Quezon Avenue flyover.

A shootout ensued, leaving Barredo severely injured and Paulo with a wound in the face.

A contract worker, who refused to give his name, said he saw the suspects abandon the Revo and transfer to a white Toyota Corolla cab bearing the label "Five Star Taxi." ***With Angeli A. Alagcan***

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We were delighted to receive the Reader's Digest SuperBrands Gold Award last year. And doubly delighted to receive it again this year. So to the readers who once again voted for us, we'd like to say from the bottom of our hearts, "Thank you. Thank you."

Pusong Pinoy PETRON

Bail for ex-child star

By Agnes E. Donato

A BAIL of P300,000 was recommended for the temporary liberty of former television soap child star Sugar Benedicto who was charged with car theft after allegedly trying to steal a businessman's vehicle in Quezon City on Sunday morning.

The 25-year-old suspect, Vanessa Benedicto in real life, has not posted bail at press time. She was detained at the Central Police District Station 8 in Project 4, Quezon City.

Benedicto was a mainstay of the TV series "Flor de Luna" and "Mirasol."

Assistant city prosecutor Mercedes Penamora recommended the bail upon the filing of car theft charges by complainant Noel Gomez, 40.

Gomez said he and Benedicto took his Toyota Corona EX Salon (TRW-704) for a test drive on Sunday morning, as the former child star had expressed interest in buying the car.

Gomez said they drove the car for a while and then returned to his house to prepare the car's documents for the sale.

But Benedicto sped off as soon as Gomez alighted from the vehicle, the complainant said.

Gomez and a neighbor chased Benedicto and cornered her on Ortigas Avenue in Pasig City.

Members of the Central Police District Office Station 8 arrested Benedicto on Ortigas Avenue near the corner of Lanuza Street.

Police said Benedicto did not resist arrest.

At the police station, a tearful Benedicto asked for Gomez's forgiveness, saying she tried to steal the car so she could sell it to finance the surgery of her sick 8-year-old son, according to investigators.

Still, Gomez decided to press charges, police said. ***With Angeli A. Alagcan***

Labor groups seek 'pro-poor government'

By Agnes E. Donato

LEADERS of the militant labor group Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino (BMP) and the pro-Erap People's Movement Against Poverty (PMAP) will link arms to show their unity as they call for a "pro-poor government" on Labor Day.

The militant youth group Anakbayan had also joined another labor group, the Kilusang Mayo Uno, in calling for the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

BMP President Victor Briz said PMAP and his group were expected to meet at the corner of Lepanto and Recto to march together to Mendiola, where both organizations will hold their May 1 rallies.

Briz said that the two groups had agreed on their positions on the issues of rising prices, unemployment and poverty.

But he stressed that the BMP had a different view on the plunder case against detained former President Joseph Estrada, whom it helped oust during the four-day Edsa 2 in January last year.

PMAP led the bloody Edsa 3 on May 1 last year.

"The merger of 'Labor Power' and 'Poor is Power' is the basis for a real People Power that will not be stolen by elitists, as what happened in the three Edsas," Briz said.

He described the May 1 rally as "a long march for pro-poor reforms and a pro-poor government."

During the protest, BMP members will assemble in front of the Supreme Court to call for the reversal of the high court decision upholding the legality of the suspension of the collective bargaining agreement between the management and employees of the Philippine Air Lines.

Anakbayan secretary general Apo Alvarez said that the Macapagal administration had failed the youth by not heeding their demand for a higher education budget, affordable tuition and job opportunities.

Alvarez reported that only 30,000, or 12 percent, of the 384,000 graduates this year would find jobs, while colleges and universities were set to increase their fees this June.

"Our chances of availing ourselves of education in the next school year are slim given the inaccessibility of education," Alvarez said. ***With Angeli A. Alagcan***

Ex-comic turns serious in Manila council

By Jerome Aning

MANILA Councilor Luciano "Lou" Veloso, a former television and movie comedian, is expected to be grilled today by his peers in the city council after he accused some of them last week of discriminating against him and others from show biz who are now members of the local legislature.

In last Thursday's session, Veloso delivered a 30-minute privilege speech, denouncing some fellow councilors for belittling the abilities of entertainers in the council.

His voice cracking, the comedian-turned-politician also complained that some of the other councilors had insulted him and were laughing behind his back.

Even before Veloso finished his speech, several councilors stood up to react or interpolate him. But Councilor Alejandro "Kim" Atienza, the presiding officer, abruptly adjourned the session for lack of time.

"I'm saddened and bothered when some of us have very low regard (for) the other councilors," Veloso said in his speech. "Is this because these people are only artists (even when) they are educated?"

The other show biz people who are members of the 38-seat council are Cita Astals, Larry "Pipoy" Silva, Isko Moreno and Robert Ortega.

Veloso said that being an entertainer, he is "sensitive" to taunts about his personality. He said that if in the future he would be made to choose, he would rather be a stage artist.

"I believe being an artist is the cleanest occupation," he said. "You will not earn if you don't sing or make music or act."

But he said that artists also learn to serve the people through politics. He said many people do not know that the "willingness to learn" is one of the traits of artists.

Veloso enumerated artists who became heroes, like Jose Rizal, a sculptor and painter; Andres Bonifacio, a playwright; Francisco Balagtas, a poet; and Apolinario Mabini, a writer.

He said artists bring a balance of representation in the city council, whose members now include a doctor, a dentist, a lawyer, an architect and a housewife.

METROBRIEFS

Makati's top dealer falls

TOMAS Magsano, believed to be the top marijuana dealer in Makati City, was arrested Sunday night in a buy-bust operation.

Members of the Makati Police's drug enforcement unit arrested Magsano, 39, at his house in Barangay South Cembo, Makati City, about 8 p.m. after two days of surveillance.

Police confiscated about a kilo of marijuana, including 29 tea bags containing the stuff, a plastic bag with marijuana stems, and three brick-shaped containers with dried marijuana. Police also seized a weighing scale.

A South Cembo barangay official tipped off the DEU about Magsano's illegal activities.

During the investigation, Magsano admitted he entered the drug trade about a year ago to support his four children by his live-in partner, said PO2 Leo Gabrang, the officer in charge of the case.

The suspect said he got his supply of marijuana from Dagupan City in Pangasinan.

Insp. Gary Reyes, Makati DEU chief, said among Magsano's clients are tricycle, jeepney drivers, and those who had gone back to using marijuana after they got tired of shabu and other drugs.

Magsano sells up to 20 sachets of marijuana at P50 each, earning about P700 to P1,000 per day.

The DEU is filing a case against Magsano today for violating the Dangerous Drugs Act. The suspect has been denied bail, since he was caught with more than 750 grams of marijuana. ***Alcuin Papa, Tarra Quismundo***

Balikbayan found dead

DID balikbayan Raymond Mandigma, 25, kill himself?

Mandigma, 25, an American citizen, was found dead yesterday in his room on Teresita corner Lardizabal streets in Sampaloc, Manila, by his father, Rodesendo, 62, said detective Edgardo Paterno of the Western Police District homicide section.

A .38-caliber revolver was found beside the body, but investigators said they doubt that what they have is a clear case of suicide. The reason: Mandigma had two gunshot wounds—one in the right temple and another in the neck, Paterno said.

The victim's father told investigators that he last saw his son alive at about 7:30 p.m. on Sunday when his son entered his bedroom alone.

At about 2 a.m. the following day, the father was awakened by the sound of two gunshots. But he went back to sleep because he thought the gunshots were fired outside their house, Paterno said.

But at about 7:30 a.m., he forcibly opened the door of his son's bedroom when his son did not answer his call. He found his son dead, Paterno said.

The father believed it was a suicide, police said. But police suspect there was foul play. Police said it was "impossible" to shoot oneself twice.

Detective Solomon Bataller said the young man arrived in the country on April 27. Mandigma worked in a hotel in the United States, where his relatives immigrated.

Bataller said police would conduct a paraffin test on the victim's body. Mandigma's father and uncle, Rodesendo and Jose Corcuera, would also be invited for paraffin tests. The two men were the victim's only known companions in the house when the incident happened, police said. ***Philip Tubeza***

Wayward car hits 8 commuters

A KOREAN tourist lost control of the car he was driving and plowed into a group of commuters waiting for a ride on Edsa in Mandaluyong City early yesterday morning.

Police identified six of the eight victims as Julie Renetre, Rodante Prado, Visitacion Malicay, Elsie Cadilina, Albino Benavidez and Rene Racsal, all residents of Mandaluyong City. Police said they were all rushed to the nearby Dr. Victor P. Potenciano Memorial Medical Center.

Rey Negranza, a VPMMC security man assigned to the hospital's emergency room, claimed that, except for Cadilina who is in serious condition, all of those injured are in stable condition.

Negranza said the driver of the speeding car, South Korean tourist Park Kyung Hyun, and his companion, Gin Seup Shin, surrendered to the police at the hospital. He said Park and Gin were also injured in the accident.

Nelson Flores

Framed up by anti-narcotics cop (Part II)

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

TRISTAN John Ngo and his billiard friends were taken to the Narcotics Group (Narcgroup) office at the Quezon City police station at the corner of Kamuning Street and Edsa, at 3 a.m. Saturday. Their captors did not allow the young men to call their parents to tell them their whereabouts. It was only hours later that the parents learned about their capture.

It was probably through Tristan that the parents of the other boys learned about their predicament.

Tristan was talking to his younger brother, Jojo, over the cellular phone when he was arrested by the narcs. Jojo had called him to say that his arrival home was long overdue. Tristan assured Jojo he was already on his way home, that he was starting his car.

***

Suddenly, his brother heard a commotion at the other end. This was at a time when Tristan was being dragged out of the car by the narcotics agents. Jojo heard shouts at the other end. There was mention of "pulis."

Although he didn't know what happened to his elder brother, Jojo looked for him in all the police precincts in Quezon City. His only clue that Tristan could be with the police was the mention of "pulis" before his phone went dead.

When Jojo finally found Tristan at the Narcgroup office at the Kamuning station, he couldn't talk to him. It was at this point that he saw a certain Senior Insp. Iglesia flick a lighted cigarette at Tristan's face.

***

When a crime suspect is taken in, the arresting cop informs him of his constitutional rights to remain silent and anything he says will be held against him, etc.

At the police station, the suspect is allowed to call his relatives or a lawyer. When a suspect is investigated, he may ask his captors for the services of a lawyer. That's his constitutional right.

Tristan and his companions were never informed of their rights. Worse, their relatives were not informed that they were being held at the Kamuning station.

And when finally they were located at the Narcgroup office, their parents wee not allowed to talk to them.

It was only after I called the Narcgroup office at 6:30 p.m. Saturday that Tristan and his companions were allowed to see their relatives.

***

Let's talk about how Tristan and his companions were arrested.

Tristan and his regular billiard buddies—Warrick Ngo, 23, (no blood relations to Tristan); Vincent Hontiveros, 23; and Kenneth Yu, 40—had just finished with their billiard games when the narcs pounced on them at the Derick's Billiards parking lot. All billiard "addicts," they would play almost every day from 3 p.m. until 3 a.m. the following day.

Employees at Derick's Billiards didn't see anything amiss. Tristan and the others were observed to be too engrossed in their game to have have talked to any person outside their group for anything other than billiards. The narcs claim that the "buy-bust" operation took place at the parking lot.

***

The narcs allege that P500,000 changed hands between Tristan's group and the buyers-poseurs. Tristan, according to the cops, received the P500,000 in exchange for 100 grams of cocaine. One gram of cocaine, the narcs said, was sold by the group for P5,000.

But, at the inquest prosecutor, only P2,000, supposedly part of the P500,000, was presented as evidence. Where's the rest of the money evidence?

C'mon, guys, don't tell me that crap that the rest of the money was cutout pieces of paper! You mean, Tristan and his group did not count your money before handing the 100 grams of cocaine to you?

***

If the Narcgroup cops were telling the truth, why should Tristan, a simple-minded man, be given the task by his group to receive such a big amount of money?

Was ultraviolet powder, invisible to the naked eye, sprinkled on the money evidence? Tristan would have had traces of the ultraviolet powder if he received and counted the money. But could they have counted such a huge sum at the parking lot?

Was Tristan Ngo positive for ultraviolet powder?

Was he taken to the crime laboratory for examination for the presence of ultraviolet powder in his hands?

***

Nine out of 10 drug pushers are addicts. Drug addicts become pushers to support their habit.

A typical addict of shabu (methamphetamine hydrocloride) or cocaine—which was much, much more expensive than shabu—is thin. The slight build is a result of his high-strung movements, his lack of sleep, his lack of appetite. Some fat people who wanted to slim down fast took shabu. Many movie actors and actresses take shabu so they would have the energy to go through a whole day of location shooting.

If being slim or slight of build is the measure for judging a shabu or cocaine addict, then Tristan is not an addict. Tristan weighs about 300 pounds, a result of his excessive love for food. He walks like a lumbering bear.

From personal experience, a person who takes shabu moves very fast and loses weight just as fast. I once had a hunting buddy whom his companions in the hunting group always teased because his being overweight made him lag way behind us in trekking up Mt. Pinatubo (this was before the eruption). Then, the next time we met in a hunting trip, my buddy had lost weight considerably. And, would you believe he ran up the mountain while we, his buddies, plodded up! It was his turn to laugh at us. We came to know later he was using shabu, and it was too late before we learned he was already hooked.

(More in the next column)

MOM

Your first teacher. Your staunch supporter.
Your premier adviser. Your no. 1 fan.
Anyway you look at it, there's simply no other
mother as wonderful as your mom.
This Mother's Day, let your mom know how
honored you are to have her as your mother.
Greet her on her special day in the
Mother's Day Special Section of the Inquirer Classifieds.
For a discounted rate of P50 per line
or P150 per column centimeter, show your affection
and appreciation for her
in a unique and loving way.
After all, for everything that she has done, isn't this just
a little something to thank her for giving you life —
and devoting hers to you as well?
And with your placement, your mom gets the chance to win
Avon, David's Salon or Body and Soul Spa gift certificates in our

MOM Makeover
RAFFLE PROMO

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
MessageBoard

PROMO MECHANICS

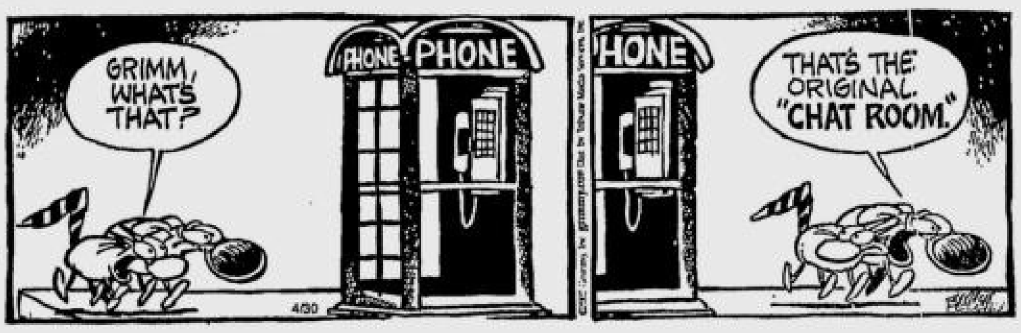
AVON color
how do you define beautiful?

DAVID'S SALON

BODY & SOUL

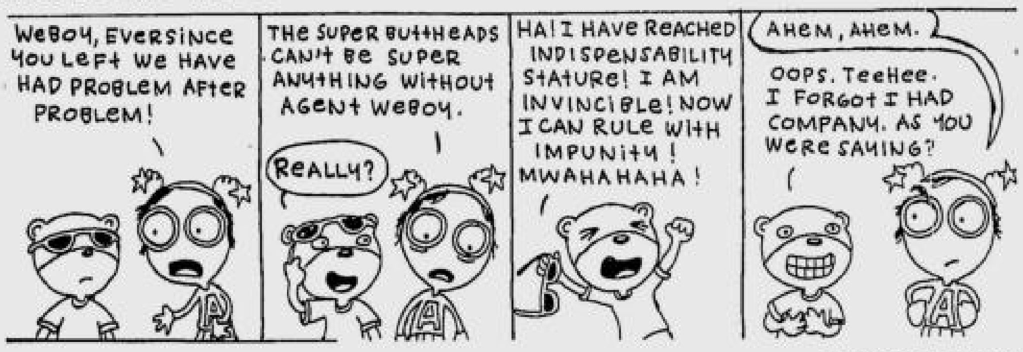
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


GRIMM, WHAT'S THAT?
PHONE
PHONE
HONE
THAT'S THE ORIGINAL "CHAT ROOM."
4/30

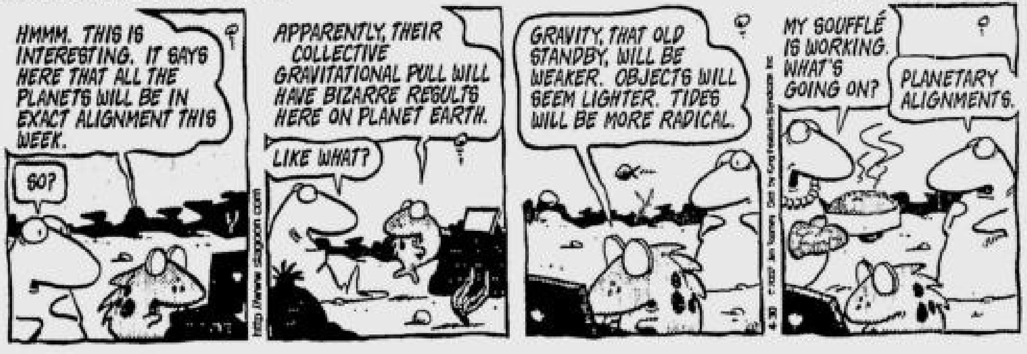
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WEBOY, EVERSINCE YOU LEFT WE HAVE HAD PROBLEM AFTER PROBLEM!
THE SUPER BUTTHEADS CAN'T BE SUPER ANYTHING WITHOUT AGENT WEBOY.
REALLY?
HA! I HAVE REACHED INDISPENSABILITY STATURE! I AM INVINCIBLE! NOW I CAN RULE WITH IMPUNITY! MWAHAHAHA!
AHEM, AHEM.
OOPS. TEEHEE. I FORGOT I HAD COMPANY. AS YOU WERE SAYING?

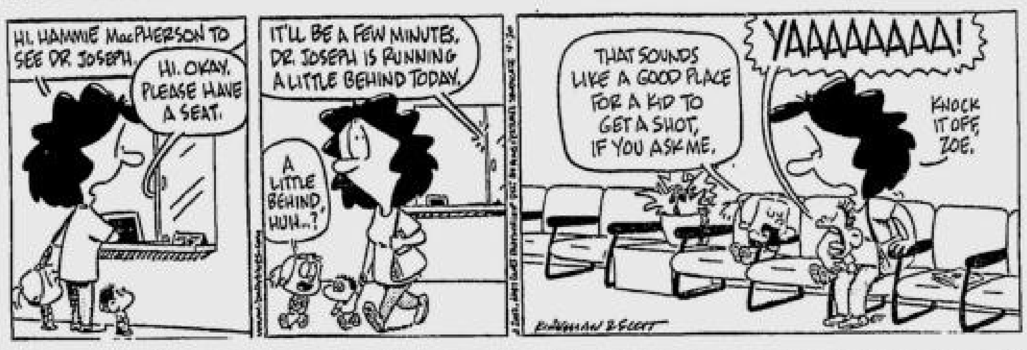
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


HMMM. THIS IS INTERESTING. IT SAYS HERE THAT ALL THE PLANETS WILL BE IN EXACT ALIGNMENT THIS WEEK.
SO?
APPARENTLY, THEIR COLLECTIVE GRAVITATIONAL PULL WILL HAVE BIZARRE RESULTS HERE ON PLANET EARTH.
LIKE WHAT?
GRAVITY, THAT OLD STANDBY, WILL BE WEAKER. OBJECTS WILL SEEM LIGHTER. TIDES WILL BE MORE RADICAL.
MY SOUFFLÉ IS WORKING. WHAT'S GOING ON?
PLANETARY ALIGNMENTS.
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HI, HAMMIE MacPHERSON TO SEE DR. JOSEPH.
HI. OKAY. PLEASE HAVE A SEAT.
IT'LL BE A FEW MINUTES. DR. JOSEPH IS RUNNING A LITTLE BEHIND TODAY.
A LITTLE BEHIND, HUH...?
THAT SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD PLACE FOR A KID TO GET A SHOT, IF YOU ASK ME.
YAAAAAAAA!
KNOCK IT OFF, ZOE.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Cloris Leachman, Willie Nelson, Jill Clayburgh

Happy Birthday: It's time to get rid of the things that are no longer working to your advantage. You need a change of scenery. You will have insight into matters pertaining to work, however, you mustn't neglect personal problems. Focus on yourself, your intentions and your goals. Your numbers are 13, 17, 28, 31, 36, 40

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You will be quick to respond to others today and should be able to accomplish whatever you start out to do. You will learn quickly and adjust to whatever changes are necessary.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You may not understand what is happening with regard to a legal or financial matter that is unfolding. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Someone you care about may be going through a difficult time. If you are sensitive to everyone else's needs you will get the same sympathy in return.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You should be able to offer some great solutions to existing problems. You will be in the limelight even if you don't want to be. Relax and enjoy the notoriety.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Sign up for interesting events that will allow you to show off your talent. You will handle any competition you face with ease, and your hard work and dedication will pay off.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't let someone you live with or know well get the better of you. Focus on what you know and what you do best. Offer to help an organization you believe in.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): This is your day to interact with friends and to make your point known. You will have the keen sense to take charge. Your ability to get things done will bring you great results.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Put your time and effort into your future. Money can be made but risks must be avoided. Your forceful manner will be enticing to potential partners.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Your high energy must be well distributed today. Take a step back and look at your situation. Nothing is as bad as it appears.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You may want to get involved in some secret activity today. Be careful not to reveal too much about yourself just yet. Listen and evaluate the situation first.

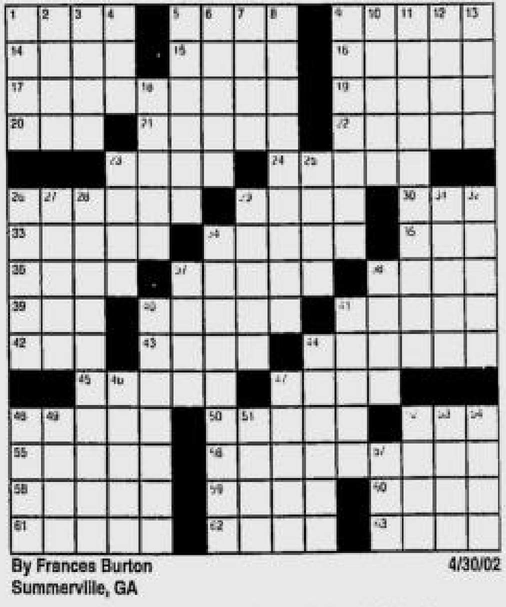
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Your humanitarian outlook will win you praise. Your strong convictions will lead you into interesting group encounters. Your creative sense and timing will help you accomplish what you set out to do.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Someone may be trying to make you look bad at work. If you feel betrayed, say something even if it means losing a friend.

Birthday Baby: You like to work within groups, taking on the most detailed jobs all by yourself. You are precise and systematic in your approach to money matters, and you will always have a long-term goal in mind.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Frances Burton
Summerville, GA

4/30/02

ACROSS
1 Soft drink
5 Andy's pal
9 Knights' weapons
14 Eden man
15 Slanted surface
16 Fill with joy
17 From Peru to Spain
19 Narrow openings
20 Golf-hole starter
21 Bay window
22 Shows concern
23 Transgressions
24 Argentine plain
26 Oval nuts
29 Clock face
30 High mountain
33 In the air
34 Old fogies
35 Born in Paris
36 Lacoste or Levesque
37 Metaphysical poet
38 Used a loom
39 Abbr. for a bus.
40 Natalie and Paula
41 Creator
42 __ Paulo
43 Toward shelter
44 Light beams
45 Less common
47 Assist
48 California ballplayer
50 Perfect example
52 Crimson or scarlet
55 Battery electrode
56 From Colorado to Italy
58 Bowler Dick
59 Hereditary unit
60 Whiff
61 Graceful birds
62 Periods of note
63 Compass direction

DOWN
1 Weapons talks, briefly
2 Garfield's pal
3 Female noble
4 Doc's org.
5 Future oaks
6 61-in-'61 guy
7 Formerly
8 Male horses
9 Mexican agaves
10 Edgar __ Poe
11 From Egypt to Virginia
12 Diminutive ending
13 Shrink hr.?
18 Low dive
23 Secure
25 Behind time
26 European capital
27 Barcelata's "Maria __"
28 From New Hampshire to Spain
29 Beneficiary
31 Pry bar
32 Equals
34 "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" poet
37 Pineapple company
38 Stinging insect
40 Vocations
41 "My Dinner with Andre" director
44 Departs
46 Shakespearean forest
47 Salon dye
48 Dog feet
49 Once again
51 Stag, e.g.
52 Took the train
53 Adam's grandson
54 Flit
57 Propel a shell

Monday's Puzzle Solved

C	R	E	P	T	■	A	L	E	R	T	■	C	P	A
L	U	N	A	R	■	S	A	M	O	A	■	A	R	C
A	D	D	R	E	S	S	B	O	O	K	■	R	O	I
D	I	S	A	B	L	E	S	■	■	E	M	B	E	D
■	■	■	B	L	O	T	■	N	O	N	C	O	M	S
A	T	T	L	E	E	■	B	E	M	O	A	N	■	■
R	E	Y	E	S	■	I	O	W	A	N	■	C	U	T
G	A	P	S	■	E	D	G	E	R	■	P	O	S	H
O	R	E	■	F	R	Y	E	R	■	C	O	P	S	E
■	■	W	A	R	I	L	Y	■	T	H	E	Y	R	E
S	H	R	I	E	K	S	■	T	H	A	T	■	■	■
P	A	I	R	S	■	■	C	H	A	R	I	S	M	A
A	N	T	■	C	A	L	L	I	N	G	C	A	R	D
T	O	E	■	A	M	O	U	R	■	E	A	S	E	D
S	I	R	■	S	A	T	E	D	■	S	L	E	D	S

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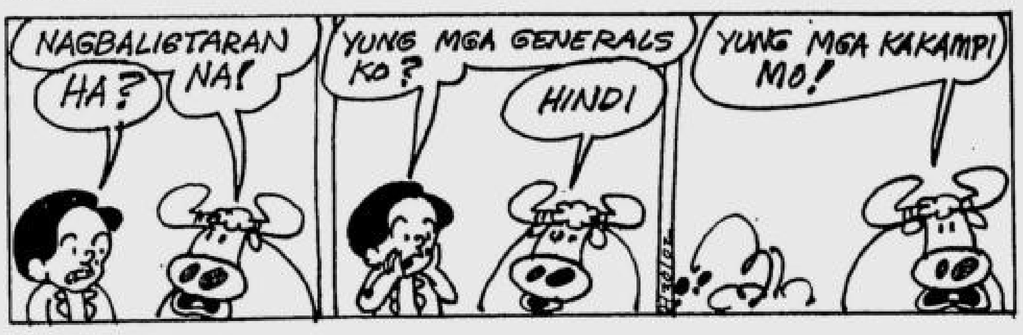
4/30/02

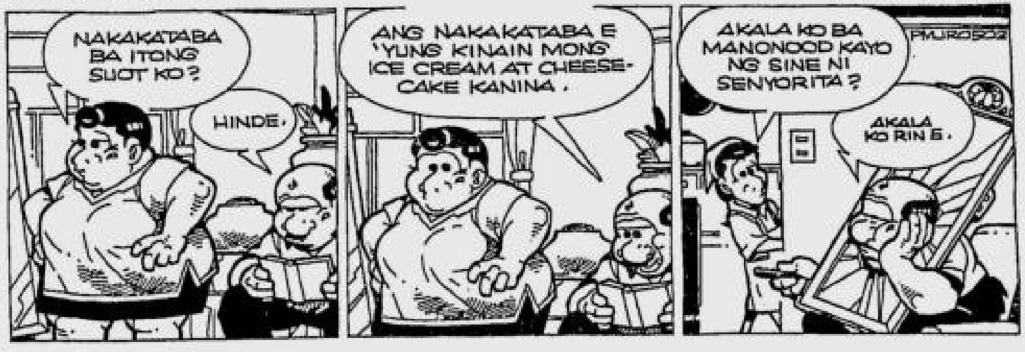
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NAGBALIGTARAN NA!
HA?
YUNG MGA GENERALS KO?
HINDI
YUNG MGA KAKAMPI MO!

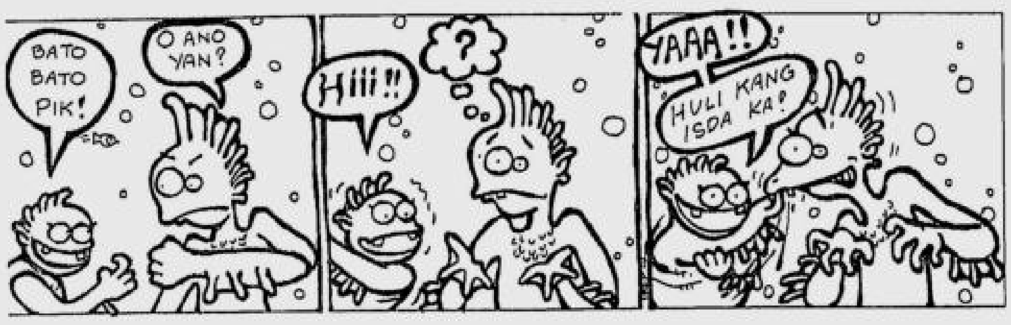
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAKAKATABA BA ITONG SUOT KO?
HINDE.
ANG NAKAKATABA E 'YUNG KINAIN MONG ICE CREAM AT CHEESE-CAKE KANINA.
AKALA KO BA MANONOOD KAYO NG SINE NI SENYORITA?
AKALA KO RIN E.

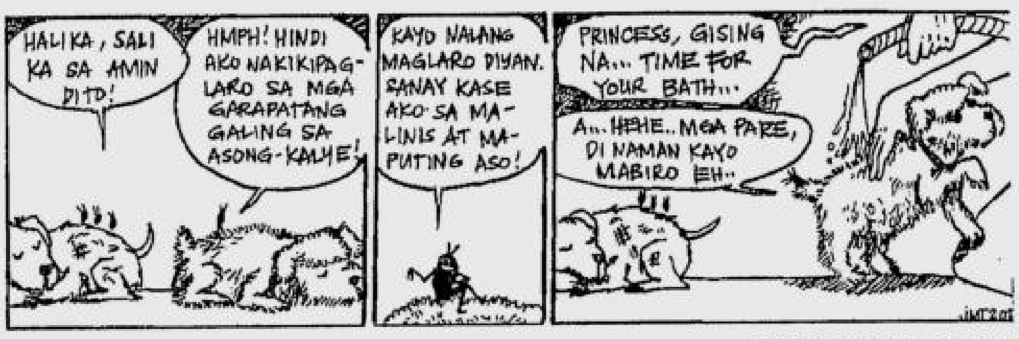
CHICHOY CHOKOY

BY IKOY RICIO


BATO BATO PIK!
O ANO YAN?
Hiii!!
?
YAAA!!
HULI KANG ISDA KA!

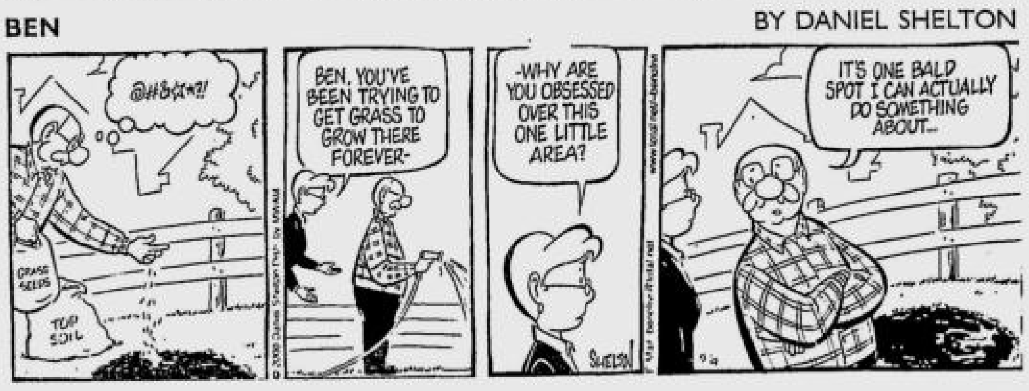
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


HALIKA, SALI KA SA AMIN DITO!
HMPH! HINDI AKO NAKIKIPAG-LARO SA MGA GARAPATANG GALING SA ASONG-KALYE!
KAYO NALANG MAGLARO DIYAN. SANAY KASE AKO SA MALINIS AT MAPUTING ASO!
PRINCESS, GISING NA... TIME FOR YOUR BATH...
A... HEHE.. MGA PARE, DI NAMAN KAYO MABIRO EH..

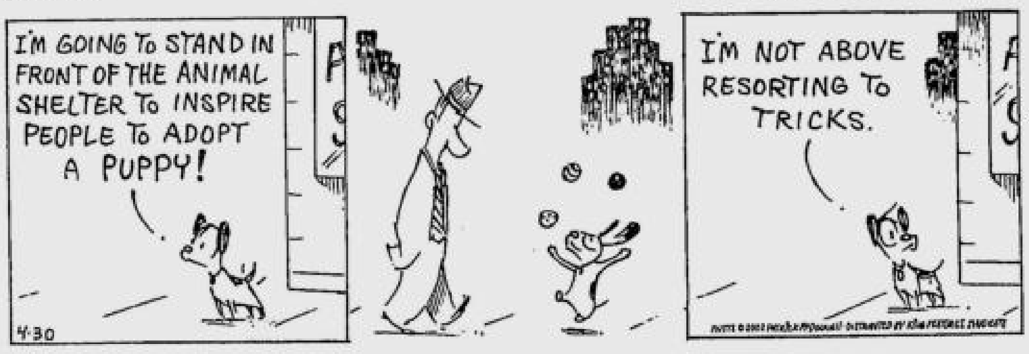
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


@#$%*?!
GRASS SEEDS
TOP SOIL
BEN, YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO GET GRASS TO GROW THERE FOREVER-
-WHY ARE YOU OBSESSED OVER THIS ONE LITTLE AREA?
IT'S ONE BALD SPOT I CAN ACTUALLY DO SOMETHING ABOUT...
SHELTON

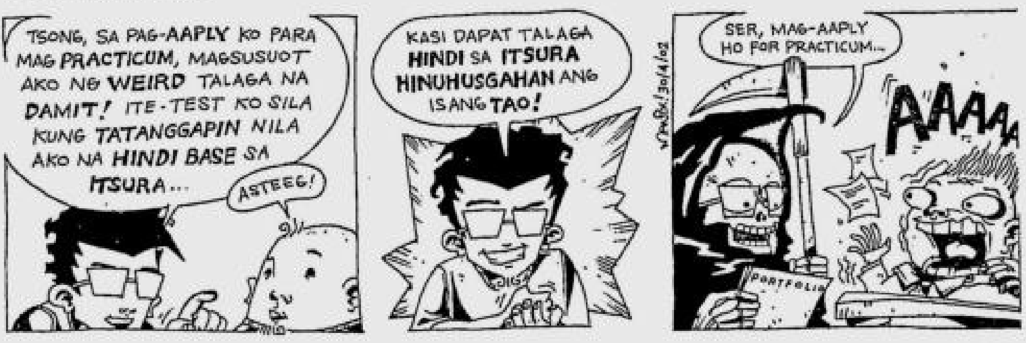
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I'M GOING TO STAND IN FRONT OF THE ANIMAL SHELTER TO INSPIRE PEOPLE TO ADOPT A PUPPY!
I'M NOT ABOVE RESORTING TO TRICKS.
4-30

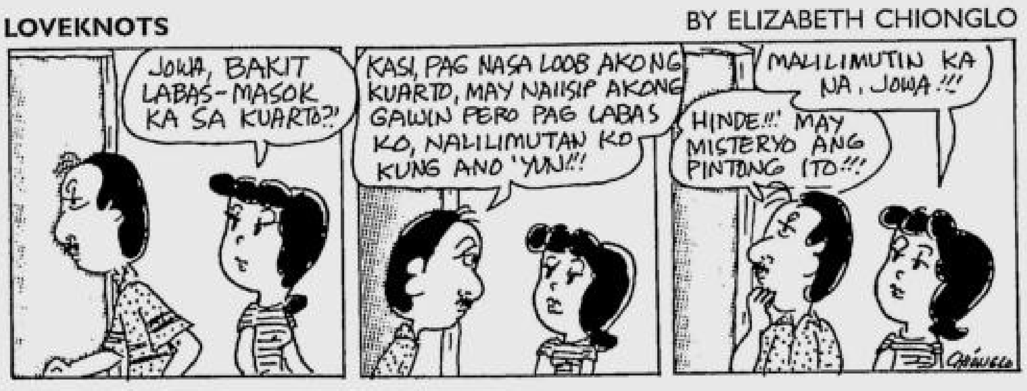
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TSONG, SA PAG-AAPLY KO PARA MAG PRACTICUM, MAGSUSUOT AKO NG WEIRD TALAGA NA DAMIT! ITE-TEST KO SILA KUNG TATANGGAPIN NILA AKO NA HINDI BASE SA ITSURA...
ASTEEG!
KASI DAPAT TALAGA HINDI SA ITSURA HINUHUSGAHAN ANG ISANG TAO!
SER, MAG-AAPLY HO FOR PRACTICUM...
AAAA
PORTFOLIO
30/4/02

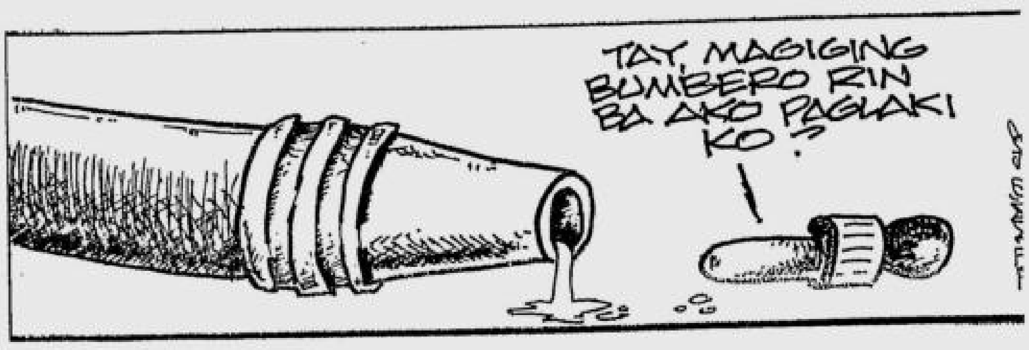
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, BAKIT LABAS-MASOK KA SA KUARTO?!
KASI, PAG NASA LOOB AKONG KUARTO, MAY NAIISIP AKONG GAWIN PERO PAG LABAS KO, NALILIMUTAN KO KUNG ANO 'YUN!!!
MALILIMUTIN KA NA, JOWA!!!
HINDE!!! MAY MISTERYO ANG PINTONG ITO!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


TAY, MAGIGING BUMBERO RIN BA AKO PAGLAKI KO?

SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 633-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173869

1	SNOW DOGS
2	I AM SAM
3	SCORPION KING
4	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
5	SCORPION KING
6	S2PID LUV
7	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
8	ROLLERBALL

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161418

1	I AM SAM
2	SHOWTIME
3	SCORPION KING
4	DEVIL'S MASK
5	SCORPION KING
6	S2PID LUV
7	ROLLERBALL
8	BLADE 2
9	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
10	IKA7 GLORYA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	SNOW DOGS
2	BLADE 2
3	I AM SAM
4	SCORPION KING
5	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
6	S2PID LUV
7	SCORPION KING
8	ROLLERBALL
9	MIMIC 2
10	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
11	MONTE CRISTO
12	CROSSROADS

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	SCORPION KING
2	SHOWTIME
3	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
4	ROLLERBALL
5	I AM SAM
6	SCORPION KING
7	DEVIL'S MASK
8	BLADE 2
9	S2PID LUV
10	SNOW DOGS
11	MONTE CRISTO
12	SCORPION KING

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	SCORPION KING
2	DEVIL'S MASK
3	ROLLERBALL
4	SCORPION KING
5	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
6	I AM SAM
7	SHOWTIME
8	MONTE CRISTO
9	S2PID LUV
10	SCORPION KING
11	BLADE 2
12	SNOW DOGS

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9285452

1	DEVIL'S MASK
2	SCORPION KING
3	SNOW DOGS
4	S2PID LUV
5	I AM SAM
6	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
7	SCORPION KING
8	ROLLERBALL
9	CLOSED
10	CLOSED
11	CLOSED
12	CLOSED

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	SCORPION KING
2	I AM SAM
3	ROLLERBALL
4	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
5	SHOWTIME
6	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
7	S2PID LUV
8	SCORPION KING
9	SNOW DOGS
10	BLADE 2

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	BLADE 2
2	TIME MACHINE
3	EVIL WOMAN
4	MIMIC 2
5	BLOW DRY
6	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
7	S2PID LUV
8	SCORPION KING

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	BLOW DRY
2	CLOSED
3	TIME MACHINE
4	BLADE 2
5	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
6	SCORPION KING
7	CLOSED
8	EVIL WOMAN

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	SHOWTIME
2	SCORPION KING
3	SCORPION KING
4	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
5	MONTE CRISTO
6	S2PID LUV

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
2	SCORPION KING
3	S2PID LUV
4	ROLLERBALL

SM CINEMA GUADALUPE
8820984

1	ARAY
2	ROLLERBALL
3	SCORPION KING

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	SCORPION KING
2	ROLLERBALL
3	S2PID LUV
4	I AM SAM

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	SCORPION KING
2	JOHN Q
3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	MIMIC 2
5	MAJESTIC
6	MONTE CRISTO

SM BICUTAN

1
2
3
4

SOON TO OPEN!
4 NEW
STATE-OF-THE-ART
VISION & SOUND

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1
2
3
4

SOON TO OPEN!
4 NEW
STATE-OF-THE-ART
VISION & SOUND

THE PODIUM

18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City

1
2

SOON TO OPEN!
2 NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART VISION & SOUND

6389781-85

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

YOUR 24 HOUR LINK TO ALL AYALA CINEMAS • 729-7777

All Digital Sound

G1 (GLORIETTA 1)
Great GP Great Price

1	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
2	I AM SAM
3	ROLLER BALL
4	SCORPION KING

G4 (GLORIETTA 4)

1	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
2	SCORPION KING
3	THX SCORPION KING 12:05 pm/ 2:10/ 4:15/ 6:20/ 8:25/ 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
4	SNOW DOGS
5	ROLLER BALL
6	I AM SAM
7	SHOWTIME

GB1 (GREENBELT 1)

1	BEFORE NIGHT FALLS
2	SCORPION KING
3	I AM SAM
4	Onstage

ATC (ALABANG TOWN CENTER)

1	THX SCORPION KING
2	I AM SAM
3	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
4	SCORPION KING
5	ROLLER BALL

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DTS)	ROLLERBALL
2 (SDDS)	SCORPION KING
3 (DTS)	SHOWTIME
4 GOLD (DTS)	SCORPION KING
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	I AM SAM
6 GOLD (SDDS)	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
8	S2PID LUV
9	SNOW DOGS
10	BLADE 2

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	
2	
3 (DTS)	DEEP END
4	
5	
6 (DTS)	
Golden Pearl THX	

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3274

1	PISTOLERO
2	SCORPION KING
3	ROLLERBALL

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	SCORPION KING
2	I AM SAM
3	DEVIL'S MASK
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ROLLERBALL
5	S2PID LUV

METROPOLIS star
tel 850.4285

1	S2PID LUV
2	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
3	PISTOLERO
4	SCORPION KING
5	HOTDOG
6	ROLLERBALL
7	
8	

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) TEL. 751-2010 TO 13

1	RIPPER

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	S2PID LUV
2	E.T.

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515

1	
2	EVANGELINE KATORSE
3	APOY SA MAGDAMAG

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	
A	

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	SCORPION KING
2	ROLLERBALL
3	S2PID LUV
4	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	SCORPION KING
2	
3	
4	PISTOLERO
5	DEVIL'S MASK
6	I AM SAM
7 (DTS)	SCORPION KING
8 (SDDS)	ROLLERBALL
9 (DOLBY)	RETURN TO NEVERLAND

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	PISTOLERO

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	S2PID LUV
2	PISTOLERO
3	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
4 (SDDS)	SCORPION KING
5	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
6 (DOLBY)	ROLLERBALL
7 (DTS)	SCORPION KING
8	HARI NG SELDA
9	RIPPER

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	
2	
3	
4	S2PID LUV
5 (SDDS)	SCORPION KING
6	RESERVE
7 (DOLBY)	ROLLERBALL
8	RETURN TO NEVERLAND

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
2	I AM SAM
3 (DTS)	ROLLERBALL
4	S2PID LUV
5 (SDDS)	SCORPION KING

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	SCORPION KING

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	SCORPION KING

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	PISTOLERO
Lords	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
Jennet	

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	SCORPION KING
2	ROLLERBALL
3	ICE AGE

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	SCORPION KING
2	RESERVE
3	PISTOLERO
4	RESERVE
5	CLOSED

New Divisoria Mall DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

FRC Cinema
Talaba Bacoor Cavite

1	
2	

Berma
tel 879.2029

1	SCORPION KING
2	RUSH HOURS

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	
2	

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	SHOWTIME
2	S2PID LUV
3 (DTS)	SCORPION KING

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
2 (DTS)	ROLLERBALL
3 (DOLBY)	SCORPION KING
4	SHOWTIME

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	ROLLERBALL
2 (DOLBY)	SHOWTIME
3 (DTS)	SCORPION KING
4	RETURN TO NEVERLAND

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	S2PID LUV
2	SCORPION KING
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	S2PID LUV
2	ICE AGE
3 (DOLBY)	SCORPION KING
4 (DTS)	TIME MACHINE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	ROLLERBALL
2	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
3	HINOG SA PILIT
4 (DTS)	SCORPION KING

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	SCORPION KING
2	ROLLERBALL
3 (DTS)	SHOWTIME
4	PAROLA
5	S2PID LUV

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	ROLLERBALL
2	SCORPION KING
3	SHOWTIME

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1	SCORPION KING
2	ROLLERBALL
3	RETURN TO NEVERLAND

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	SHOWTIME
2	S2PID LUV
3	ITLOG

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	MIMIC 2
2	RESERVE
3	SHOWTIME

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	
2 (DTS)	SCORPION KING

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	PAROLA
2	S2PID LUV
3	SCORPION KING

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	S2PID LUV
2	TIME MACHINE
3	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
4	E.T.

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY SR)	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
2	S2PID LUV
3 (DTS)	SCORPION KING
4	SHOWTIME

***Movies are subject to change without prior notice**

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

GMG INTERNATIONAL

PREMIERE CINEMA THX

NOW SHOWING!

RIPPER

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS
@ Robinsons Malls

NOW SHOWING

Galleria
632- 9115- 16
633- 7641 loc. 279

1 THX	SPIDERMAN
2	SPIDERMAN
3	I AM SAM
4	I AM A FISH
5	VIDEOKE KING
6	SPIDERMAN
7	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
8	SCORPION KING
9	BLADE 2
10	SHOWTIME

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

1	SPIDERMAN
2	BLADE 2
3	SHOWTIME
4	I AM A FISH
5	VIDEOKE KING
6	SPIDERMAN
7	I AM SAM

Metro East - Marcos hway
687- 8193 / 8280

1	I AM SAM
2	SPIDERMAN
3	SCORPION KING
4	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
5	VIDEOKE KING
6	ROLLERBALL
7	SPIDERMAN
8	BLADE 2

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30

1	SPIDERMAN
2	SPIDERMAN
3	I AM SAM
4	SCORPION KING
5	VIDEOKE KING
6	E.T.
7	RUSH HOURS
8	IKAW LANG HANGGANG NGAYON

Imus
471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	SCORPION KING
2	CROSSROAD
3	ROLLERBALL
4	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
5	I AM SAM
6	S2PID LUV

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459

1	SPIDERMAN
2	SPIDERMAN
3	ICE AGE
4	SCORPION KING
5	TIME MACHINE
6	GOOD ADVICE

Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78

1	SPIDERMAN
2	SPIDERMAN
3	VIDEOKE KING
4	SCORPION KING
5	HART'S WAR
6	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

Star Mills- Sn Fernando, Pamp
875- 1927
961-5318 / 5270

1	SPIDERMAN
2	SPIDERMAN
3	SCORPION KING
4	VIDEOKE KING
5	SHOWTIME
6	

malabon citisquare-
soon to open.

Late Night Screening

SPIDERMAN

on
May 3 & 4, 2002
Friday & Saturday - 11:00 p.m. @
Robinsons Movieworld Galleria

how-2-reach-us:

email: htc@netasia-mnl.net
http://www.robinsonsmovieworld.com
call-a-movie 536- 7812

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

FROM THE MAKERS OF THE MUMMY AND THE MUMMY RETURNS!

WARRIOR. LEGEND. KING.

THE ROCK
THE SCORPION KING

The Scorpion King original soundtrack is now out on CDs and casettes. Featuring the hit single "I Stand Alone" By Godsmack

NOW SHOWING AT ALL AYALA CINEMAS

AYALA CINEMAS · Vortex · UNIVERSAL · MCA UNIVERSAL · united international pictures

Arkdia launches 'High on e!'

ARKDIA (that's correct, Arkdia), the entertainment venue on Remedios Street in Malate that boasts of state of the art lights, sound and video facilities, continues with its "high on e!" night.

Held twice a month every payday, high on e! has live bands, interactive on-stage games and raffle draws.

A grand launch of high on e! will be held tonight. Exciting prizes are up for grabs, including an overnight stay for four at Baguio Green Valley Townhomes courtesy of Club Panoly Resorts, spa and makeover packages courtesy of Rojaro Beauty Center, and a designer outfit from Albert Figueras.

Prizes from event sponsors Allied Domecq, Popperoo flavored popcorns, Dioni's Cafe, Socialite Karaoke and more will also be given away.

High on e! tickets are available at Arkdia. Call 400-9974 or visit 542-544 Remedios St., Malate, Manila.

NOW SHOWING @
GREENBELT CINEMA

Javier Bardem
Olivier Martinez · Andrea Di Stefano
Johnny Depp & Sean Penn

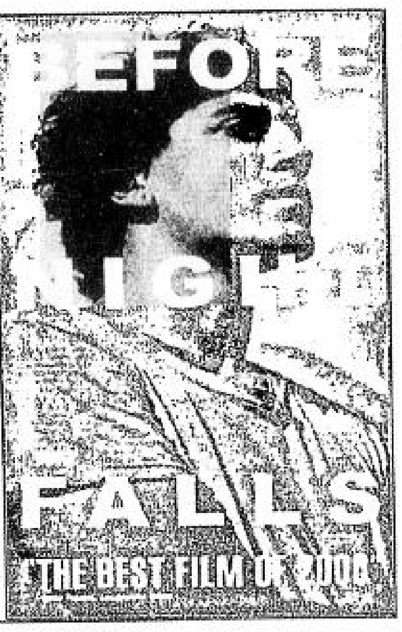
"'Before Night Falls' is rupturous, intoxicating filmmaking!.. Don't miss it! Javier Bardem gives a mesmerizing and inspired performance!"
-Rex Reed, New York Observer

"'Before Night Falls' is a potent, visually stunning masterpiece! Javier Bardem gives a riveting, emotionally naked performace."
-Guy Flatley, Interview

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R) Strictly For Adults

WARNING! This film is unanimously rated R-18 for its adult thematic content which is Homosexuality and scenarios of NUDITY.

AYALA CINEMAS · SKYFILMS



THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	S2PID LUV
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	SCORPION KING
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	ROLLERBALL
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	SCORPION KING
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	DEVIL'S MASK
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	I AM SAM
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	SCORPION KING
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HALIK SA LUPA / SUGAR AND SPICE
ODEON	SCORPION KING
ODEON-2	ITLOG
ROBEN	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
TANDEM-1	ITLOG
TANDEM-2	IKA-7 GLORYA
TIMES	BEHIND ENEMY LINES / SUPREME SUNCTIONS
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
REMAR	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
REMAR-2	SCORPION KING
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	SCORPION KING
B	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
C	PISTOLERO
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-2	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	IKA-7 GLORYA
CINEMA-2	SHOWTIME
CINEMA-3	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	SNOW DOGS
CINEMA-6	ICE AGE
CINEMA-7	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
CINEMA-8	E.T.
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	ROLLERBALL
CINEMA-12	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
CINEMA-14	I AM SAM
CINEMA-15	S2PID LUV
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	SNOW DOGS
CINEMA-2	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-3	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
CINEMA-4	ROLLERBALL
CINEMA-5	SHOWTIME
CINEMA-6	I AM SAM
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

89.9 trivia contest winners off to Sydney

POP station Magic 89.9 is headed for Australia, where Grammy Award winner Destiny's Child is slated to perform on May 3 at the Sydney Entertainment Center.

Magic 89.9 held a month-long Destiny's Child trivia contest for listeners who have valid Australian passports and visas. The contest ended in a raffle which picked two listeners who won front-seat tickets to the Sydney concert, as well as free round-trip tickets and full hotel accommodations.

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City · Tel. No: 8981440-41 · DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

SNOW DOGS - GP 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	SCORPION KING- P 13 1:20, 3:30,5:40, 7:50, 10:00	RETURN TO NEVERLAND - GP 12:20, 2:10, 4:00, 5:50, 7:40, 9:30
ROLLERBALL - R 18 1:30, 3:35, 5:40, 7:45, 9:50	SHOWTIME - P 13 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7:35, 9:45	I AM SAM - GP 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1	SCORPION KING 11:00, 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00 P13
CINEMA 2	I AM SAM 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00 GP

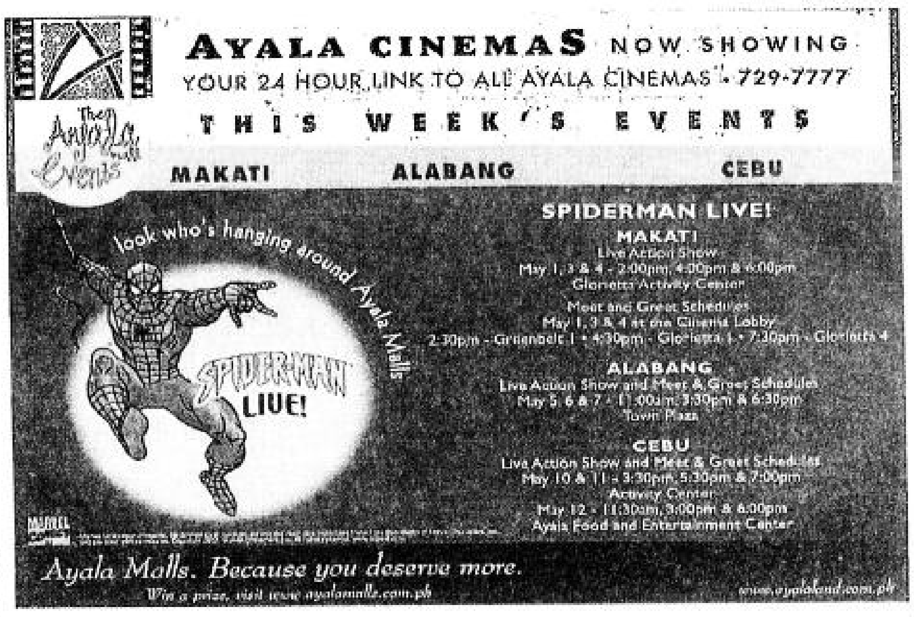
Matinee: P80.00 - Screenings before 5:00pm, Monday thru Friday (Free Seating).
Reserved Seating: P120.00 - After 5:00pm; Saturday, Sunday, Holidays.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA • 7224496

MUSIC MUSEUM
MUSIC MUSEUM MAY 4, 2002 (ALLAN K.) K NA K KA NA BA? REPEAT 9:00 PM / MAY 11 REGINE ON TOUR (Regine Velasquez) 9:00 PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION PLS. CALL: 721-8726 OR 721-0635

OPENS TOMORROW
Exclusively at the following theaters only:
POWER PLANT CINEMA * GLORIETTA 4 * SM MEGAMALL
SM MANILA * ROBINSON'S GALLERIA and ROBINSON'S ERMITA

A POTION PUT THEM IN THE OCEAN!
HELP! I'M A FISH
SKYFILMS

MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage | ALL AGES ADMITTED


AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING
YOUR 24 HOUR LINK TO ALL AYALA CINEMAS • 729-7777
THIS WEEK'S EVENTS
MAKATI · ALABANG · CEBU

SPIDERMAN LIVE!

MAKATI
Live Action Show
May 1, 3 & 4 - 2:00pm, 4:00pm & 6:00pm
Glorietta Activity Center
Meet and Greet Schedules
May 1, 3 & 4 at the Cinema Lobby
2:30pm - Greenbelt 1 • 4:30pm - Glorietta 1 • 7:30pm - Glorietta 4

ALABANG
Live Action Show and Meet & Greet Schedules
May 5, 6 & 7 - 11:00am, 3:30pm & 6:30pm
Town Plaza

CEBU
Live Action Show and Meet & Greet Schedules
May 10 & 11 - 3:30pm, 5:30pm & 7:00pm
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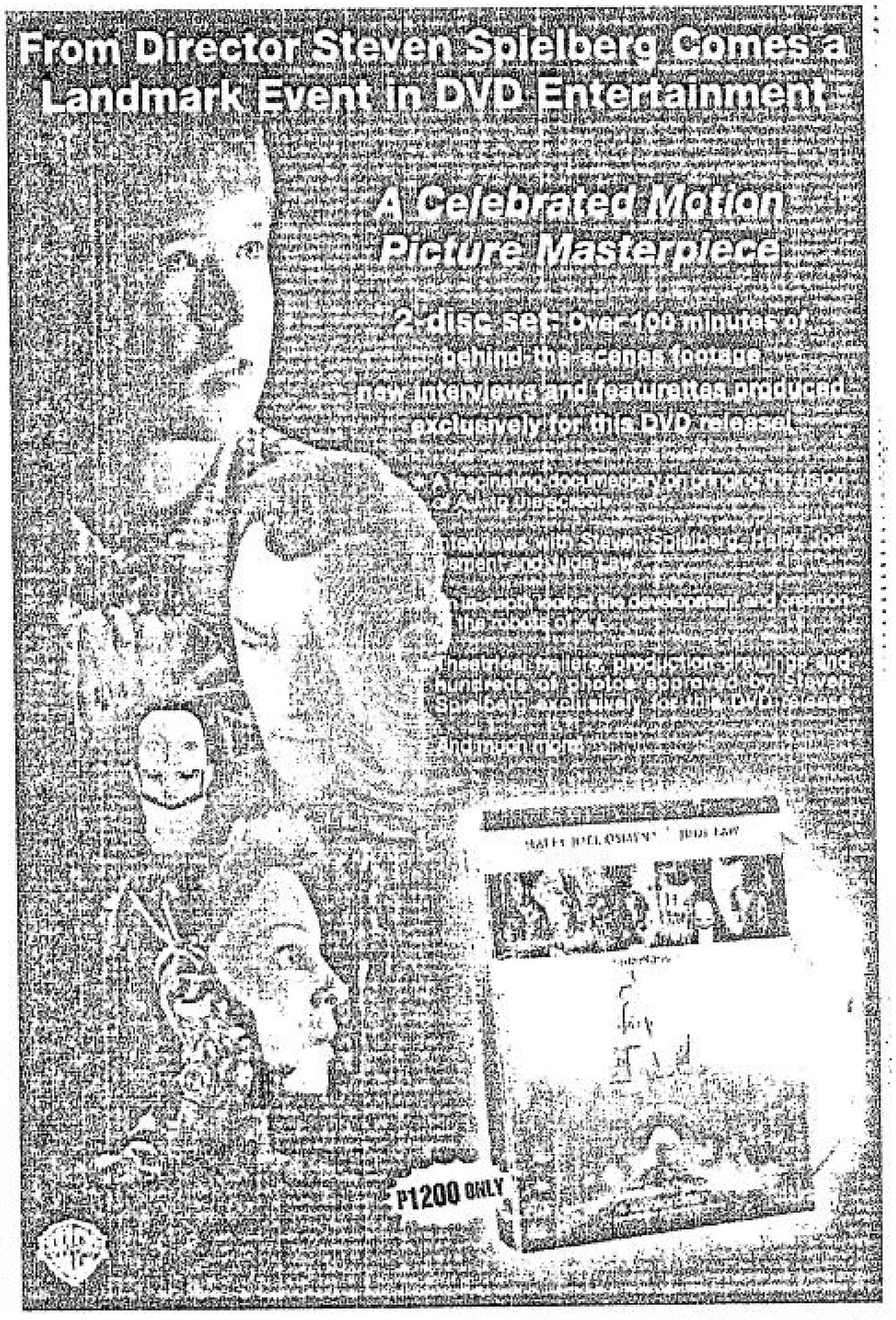
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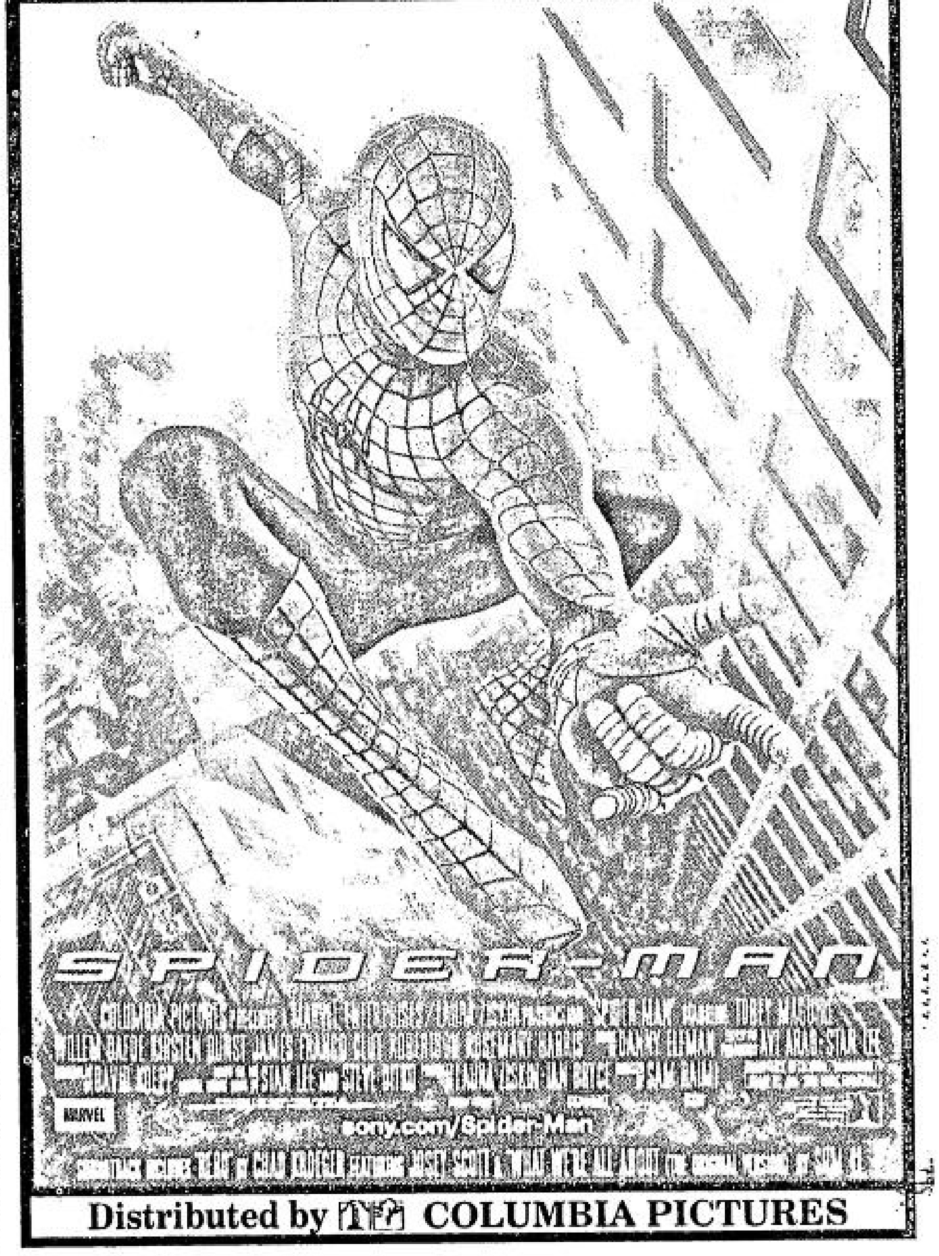
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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Focus on Asian filmakers

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WITH many Asian film people now "going Hollywood" with alacrity, it's heartening to see that one of the region's most acclaimed directors, Chinese cinema's **Zhang Yimou,** has made up his mind to continue to work at home.

This, despite the many tempting offers he's gotten from movie producers in the west, who have been impressed with his unique films, which since the 1990s have helped bring Chinese movies to the rapt attention of the wider international audience.

Zhang's decision to say "Thanks but no thanks—not yet, anyway" to Hollywood has baffled some of his colleagues, but there's no big mystery as far as the Chinese director is concerned: Big-bucks filmmaking in the States is fine, but he simply can't find the time to shoot a project there, because he's so busy making the movies he likes to make on his home turf.

At the moment, all of his energies are focused on completing a big period martial arts epic, "Hero," with **Zhang Ziyi**, **Jet Li**, **Maggie Cheung** and **Tony Leung** headlining. The movie is eagerly awaited and could prove to be an even bigger hit than "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon."

Meanwhile, filmmakers in India are slowly but surely realizing that their "Bollywood" is different from Hollywood, and never the twain should meet: In particular, Indian directors have stopped apologizing for the florid, idiosyncratic song and dance numbers that pepper practically any kind of movie shot in their vast, tumultuous country.

Time was when such unmotivated musical numbers were thought to be silly, nonsensical and campy, but India's film people have learned to be proud of their uniqueness.

They argue that music is much more a part of Indian life than in the USA, so it should continue to hold sway in Indian films, no matter if Americans find them gauche or even hysterically funny.

The Indian audience expects them to be the icing on the cake of most any movie, and a film that opts not to include them stands the very real risk of bombing at the box office.

So, if film people in the west continue to find them weird, tough!

Feedback

FROM a reader who prefers to remain anonymous: "A few days ago, some family members were talking about **Elvira Manahan** and 'Two for the Road' and we came to the conclusion that nothing on the 'boob tube' today comes close to that show. It was in a class all by itself.

"You and *Tita* Elvira were both foil and friend to each other as you would support, then criticize, then end an argument with some witty quip that sounded both mischievous and flirtatious, then the inimitable laughter as the shot would fade out for a commercial.

"You should air those tapes again. Perhaps on late-night cable TV. The Edsa Generations have grown up not knowing quality entertainment as they were deprived of the magic that was 'Two for the Road.' My wife only has some vague recollection of the show, and nothing else. A rerun of the best of 'Two for the Road' would be a fitting tribute to both of you."

NOTHING compares: The late Elvira Manahan (with a young Martin Nievera)

NUT: I'll bring this up with our director-producer, **Maria V. Montelibano,** and see what happens.

'The Adventure of Tintin'

BY popular demand, the popular adventure series, "The Adventures of Tintin," is returning to the Cartoon Network starting May 1, weekdays at 9:30 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., Philippine time.

Adapted from Herge's famous comic strip of the same title, the animated series follows the globetrotting and cliffhanging escapades of a young, hot-blooded newspaper reporter with extraordinary sleuthing skills and boundless energy.

With his faithful dog Snowy, Tintin explores the most intriguing places on earth in search of hot stories. Through his travels, he becomes acquainted with Captain Haddick, a retired ship captain with a weakness for whisky; a brilliant inventor named Calculus, and clumsy twin-detectives Thompson and Thompson who keep getting in Tintin's way. Undaunted, Tintin investigates fearlessly, constantly in search for the truth.

Movies on HBO

MONDAY, May 6 at 9 a.m., "All I Want for Christmas." 12 noon, "The Art of War."

Tuesday, May 7 at 9:30 a.m., "Songs in Ordinary Time." 7:45 p.m., "The Hunt for Red October."

Wednesday, May 8 at 6:30 a.m., "The Public Eye." 2:45 a.m., "The Best Man."

Thursday, May 9 at 2 p.m., "Interview with the Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles." 9 p.m., "The Gift."

Friday, May 10 at 1 p.m., "The Patriot." 7:30 p.m., "Rain." 2:45 a.m., "Picnic."

Saturday, May 11 at 12 noon, "For Love of the Game."

Sunday, May 12 at 7:45 a.m., "Scent of A Woman." 4 p.m., "Maverick."

LJ happy with PBA's Rob Wainwright

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

I BUMPED into **LJ Moreno** and her African American boyfriend **Rob Wainwright** in Boracay. Rob plays for Shell in the PBA.

The lovey-dovey couple were unmindful of onlookers. I teased LJ: "So, your on-and-off romance with **Diether Ocampo** is officially over? Remember when I acted as a sort of referee while you and Diet were having one of your lovers' quarrels?"

She smiled. "Yeah, but I got tired of the cycle. I'm happy now and so is he. Rob and I have been on for three months but we've been friends for a long time."

What happened betwen LJ and Diet only goes to show that love is not necessarily better the second or nth time around. Sometimes hearts can no longer take being given the runaround. As for LJ and Rob, may they not let any culture clash come between them.

Albert at 41

ALBERT Martinez turned 41 last April 19 but he neither looks nor feels his age. He looks even younger than some newcomers.

Albert revealed: "I eat the right food, exercise a lot and observe clean living. I guess that's the secret."

He had a quiet celebration and a Mass at home with **Liezl** and their kids. He vows to make time to go on vacation with his family now that he's starting another year in his full-packed life. The Martinezes enjoy taking out of town trips like last Christmas which they spent in Baguio and New Year in Boracay.

Albert bought himself a new watch for his birthday. Maybe to remind him to find time for his planned holiday trips with Liezl and the kids. Most of the time, parenthood is not having a minute (especially for someone as busy as Albert) but always taking a moment to really be there for one's kids.

A belated Happy Birthday, Little (that's Albert's pet name).

MORENO

A girl for Arlene

CONGRATS to my dear friend **Arlene Muhlach**, who gave birth to an adorable girl last April 22. The baby weighed 8.8lbs and was delivered by Doctor Pastorfide. He's the same doctor who attended to Arlene's sister-in-law **Charlene** when she gave birth to her and **Aga Muhlach**'s twins.

Following the Muhlach family tradition, Arlene chose a name for her baby that starts with the letter "A," Aliyah Anne. Her cousin Liezl (who's like a sister to me) told me that they even use hand-me-down baptismal gowns for their babies. The gown Liezl wore during her baptism was also what her kids used when they were baptized. That's how closely-knit they are.

Medals for Monsour

CONGRATS are also in order for another good friend, **Monsour del Rosario**, who just got back from Korea with the national taekwondo team after participating in two competitions.

Mon gushed: "We won seven gold medals, two silver and two bronze!"

Unlike most action stars who come across as flashy, Mon goes about his business in a quiet way and makes sure he delivers. And that's not just in movies but also in other fields where many others dare not go.

For feedback, e-mail luvludg@hotmail.com, friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com, wateringhole2000@yahoo.com

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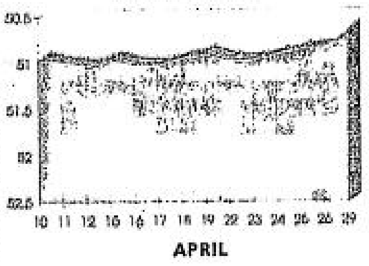
Treasury bill rates continue to slide

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY RONNIE CABUANG

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P50.630 = $1
As of 5 p.m., April 29, 2002

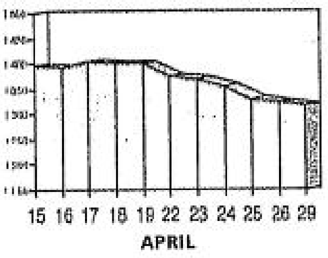
¥128.54 = $1
As of 5 p.m., April 26, 2002

GOLD: $310.95/ AP
per ounce Hong Kong, April 29, 2002

STOCK MARKET

Stocks end lower

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

SHARES continued their downtrend yesterday as concerns over possible street protests on May 1 and first quarter earnings blues kept prices depressed, traders said.

The main index shed nearly 1.5 percent in the first half-hour of trade before clawing back some lost ground on light bargain-hunting later in the session. The index ended down 8.95 points, or 0.68 percent, at 1,315.01.

It was the lowest closing level since Jan. 30 this year.

Turnover totaled P856.26 million, up from P531.12 million on Friday.

Jitters over possible clashes on May 1 between police and supporters of ousted President Joseph Estrada kept many investors on the sidelines.

Reuters

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BENCHMARK 91-day treasury bill rate again fell to a record low after the government decided to reject "unreasonable" bids from banks and keep its borrowing rates at low levels.

For the 14th straight auction this year, the benchmark 91-day treasury bill rate slid by 4.8 basis points to 4.299 percent while the yield of the six-month debt paper went down by 17.2 basis points to 4.771 percent.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza told reporters after the auction that the rate had not fallen as sharply as in previous weeks because banks wanted to stay liquid during a holiday-shortened week. May 1 is a government holiday for Labor Day.

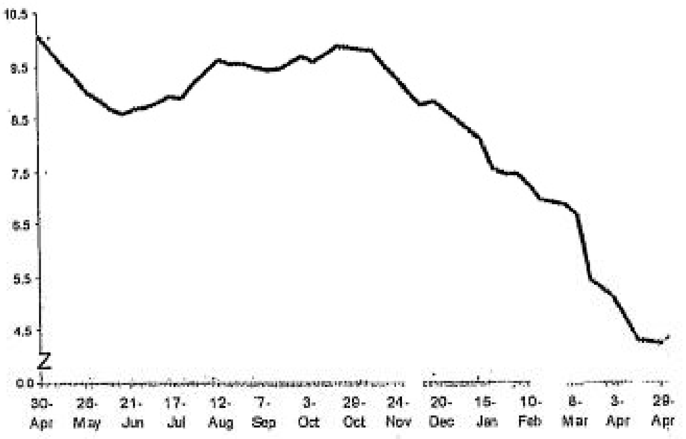
"It's just that the market is being affected by the shortened trading week," Edeza said.

The 91-day bill rate has been falling to successive record lows over the last few auctions as highly liquid banks bid fiercely to place funds in reliable government securities.

The Treasury awarded only P3.3 billion worth of the 91-day bills out of the P3.5 billion on offer. The rate was at 4.299 percent against the previous rate of 4.347

TREASURY/ B2

91-day Treasury bill rates
(April 30, 2001- April 29, 2002)



Japanese car firms buck new tax scheme

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE CHAMBER of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) is urging the government to stick to an engine-based tax system, keep the tax preference on Asian utility vehicles, and plug the loopholes on used, imported vehicles as part of a tax reform package for the automotive industry.

Except for curbing imports of pre-owned vehicles, Campi's position is in direct contrast to the stand of maverick Ford Motor Company Philippines Inc., which is lobbying for a price-based tax system and a halt in the tax exemption on AUVs.

Campi is the country's biggest automotive group dominated by Japanese assemblers while Ford—which came back in 1999 after leaving the Philippines at the height of the economic crisis in the 1980s--is not a member.

Campi members Toyota Motor Philippines Corp., Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. and Isuzu Philippines Corp. are the Top 3 assemblers in the country in terms of sales largely because of their AUV models. Ford, which does not sell AUVs, has griped about the tax exemption on AUVs because they pose unfair competition to its sedans and gas-guzzling SUVs and pick-up trucks.

In a position paper submitted to the departments of finance and of trade and industry, Campi president Vicente Mills Jr. said his group was concerned about the shift to a value-based system because it would unduly penalize buyers of AUVs when the government wanted only to target the sport utility vehicles that have been abusing the 10-seater tax exemption. "The tax reform should support and protect products contributing to public transport and industry development."

Mills said the shift to price-based valuation would lead to constant price changes due to foreign exchange rate fluctuations unlike the current engine-based tax system where the taxes paid would be fixed regardless of the peso-dollar level.

"The value-based scheme is a very drastic change and is applicable to developed countries where the currency and economic environment are very stable,"

JAPANESE/ B2

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ITOGON-SUYOC LISTING ISSUE

Court urged to stop implementation of SEC order

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By Doris C. Dumlao

VETERAN stockbroker Robert Coyiuto Jr. has asked the Court of Appeals to stop the Philippine Stock Exchange from executing the Securities and Exchange Commission's order exempting dormant mining firm Itogon-Suyoc Mines Inc. from the bourse's listing rules.

In a 71-page petition filed on April 25, Coyiuto asked the court to prohibit PSE Inc., his 14 fellow PSE directors and ISMI from implementing the SEC directive.

"The petitioner is instituting this derivative or representative suit on behalf of the PSE in order to protect or vindicate its corporate rights as a self-regulatory organization (SRO) under the Securities Regulation Code (SRC) from unlawful interference of the SEC," the petition said.

A derivative suit means the cause of action devolves on the corporation, the wrongdoing or harm having been or being caused on the corporation and not on the particular stockholder bringing the suit. The petitioner must have exhausted intra-corporate remedies prior to elevating the issue to the courts.

The SEC directive overruled the decision of the previous PSE board to disallow the listing of additional shares of ISMI, which sold a 40-percent stake to Philweb.com, the technology holding firm of former trade minister Roberto Ongpin. The SEC argued that the bourse had "exceeded its discretion" by refusing to grant cash-strapped ISMI exemption from a requirement to undertake a stock rights offering prior to the sale of shares to a new investor.

The PSE earlier blocked the listing of the said shares because the price discount was beyond the 10-percent margin against average market price prescribed by the listing rules, which were intended to protect the rights of minority shareholders from unfair dilution.

Coyiuto cited three grounds for bringing the case to the appellate court despite the decision of the new PSE board led by Vivian Yuchengco to accept the SEC directive. He alleged that:

- The SEC committed serious error and grave abuse of discretion in issuing the directives, noting that the SRC did not give it any power, jurisdiction or authority to reverse the decision of the PSE as an SRO;
- The SEC acted arbitrarily in arrogating unto itself the discretion to exempt ISMI's private placement with Philweb, explaining that the application for exemption from the rule was a matter addressed to the sound discretion of the PSE; and,
- The SEC committed serious error and grave abuse of discretion in acting upon the complaint of ISMI to exhaust administrative remedies within the PSE as an SRO, noting that the SEC should have dismissed ISMI's complaint as the same was within the jurisdiction of the regional trial court.

The petition noted that the same rule was uniformly applied to the following listed companies: PNOC Exploration Corp.; Manila Broadcasting Co.; SPI Technologies Inc.; Semirara Coal Corp.; First Metro Investment Corp.; Easycall Communication Philippines Inc.; and Negros Navigation Co.

"The SEC directives and order will open a floodgate to issuers and listed companies of the exchange that may not be satisfied with the application of the PSE rules," it said. "The ISMI case is a clear refusal of an investor to comply with a valid and subsisting rule of the exchange to the detriment of the minority shareholders."

Treasury . . .

From page B1

percent. Bids totaled P5.25 billion.

The 91-day bill rate is used by Philippine banks to price their own loans.

The Treasury also made only a partial award of 182-day bills at the auction. It sold P2.935 billion of the six-month paper out of the P3 billion on offer at a rate of 4.771 percent. At the previous auction, the 182-day bills fetched 4.943 percent.

Bids for the 182-day bills totaled P3.636 billion.

A full award of P2.5 billion was, however, made of the 364-day bills at 5.19 percent against the previous 5.548 percent. Bids totaled P3.24 billion.

The Treasury also decided not to open an over-the-counter market for banks as it had done in previous auctions.

Edeza said the market remained awash with liquidity. He explained that banks, mindful of the May 1 holiday, were wary of taking too much cash out of their vaults because they may not be able to comply with the 16-percent reserve requirement.

"At this point, there is still too much liquidity and there is no reason yet for rates to move up," Edeza said.

"Those we rejected were throwaway bids. Why would we reward those guessing and speculating to the detriment of other market participants who believe that rates should still move down," the treasurer pointed out.

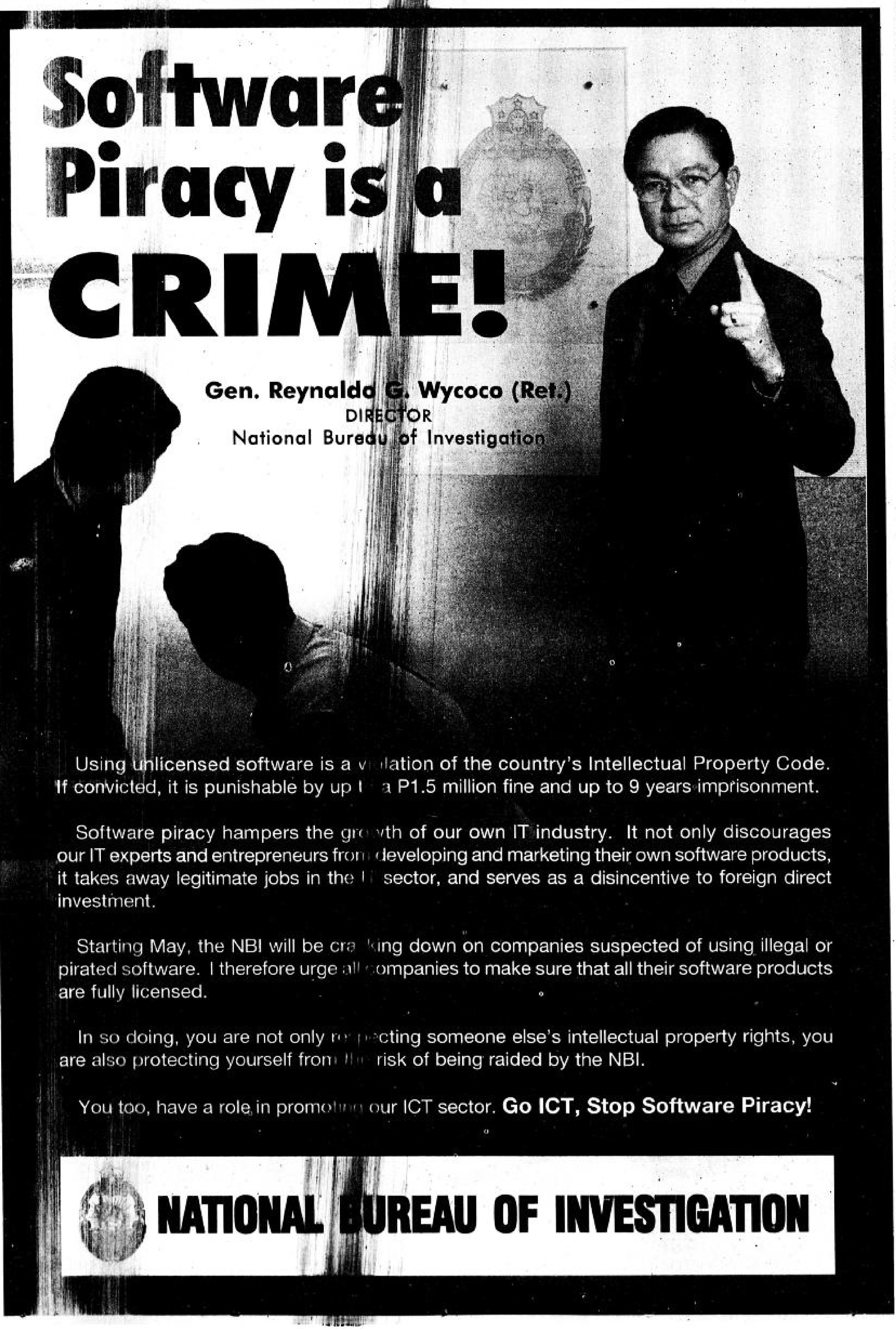
Japanese . . .

From page B1

Mills said.

Mills also stressed that tax reforms in the industry should include a government assurance to plug the loopholes in the importation of second-hand vehicles that have eaten into new vehicle sales and maintain stable and predictable development programs to allow assemblers to make long-term plans.

Mills said that while the industry supports the legislative restructuring of the existing excise tax on motor vehicles, its members have yet to agree on the reforms that have to be undertaken.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Starting May, the NBI will be cracking down on companies suspected of using illegal or pirated software. I therefore urge all companies to make sure that all their software products are fully licensed.

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NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

SINGLE BORROWER'S LIMIT

DBP seeks easing of loan ceiling

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE STATE-OWNED Development Bank of the Philippines will ask the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to ease up on the single borrower's limit so that the bank could continue lending to financial institutions with a good credit record.

In a briefing with reporters following the turnover ceremony at the bank yesterday, new DBP president Simon Paterno said that because of the consolidation in the banking industry, DBP was hitting its single borrower's limit, thus hampering the bank's wholesale lending operations.

Under BSP rules, a bank cannot lend, on a wholesale basis, more than 35 percent of its total loan portfolio to a single borrower.

PATERNO

Documents from DBP showed that last year, Bank of the Philippine Islands accounted for the biggest chunk of DBP's wholesale lending portfolio as a result of its merger with Far East Bank and Trust Co.

DBP uses funds from multilateral agencies such as the World Bank to lend to targeted borrowers and to participating financial institutions, which in turn re-lend to the kind of borrowers specified by the programs.

Out of 147 accredited financial institutions, only 25 are active or those that have existing credit lines.

"We want to encourage the successful financial institutions to do more," Paterno said.

Meanwhile, he also said he would clarify with the Department of Finance the profit and dividend policy expected of DBP.

Paterno said he would want to remit less of DBP's profits to the national government so that the bank could channel more resources to achieve its development objectives.

DBP last year posted a net income of P1.8 billion, but the DOF has yet to finalize the amount of dividends it will ask from the bank.

Last week, DBP announced that its first-quarter income reached P486 million, exceeding the P413-million target for the period by 18 percent. The first-quarter profit, based on a pre-loan-loss provision basis, was also 15 percent higher than the comparative level last year. The bank is expected to overshoot its profit target of P1.95 billion this year.

COUNTRY SHARES

As of April 30, 2002

	BUYING	SELLING
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB A/B*	1.65M/1.7M*	1,750,000
ALTA VISTA A	300,000	375,000
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	725,000	750,000
CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB A/B*	75,000	95,000/105,000*
CAMP JOHN HAY GOLF	280,000	-
CANLUBANG	500,000	-
CAPITOL HILLS	-	125,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	160,000	190,000
EAGLE RIDGE A/B*/C**	620,000**	350,000/450,000*/700,000**
EVERCREST A/B*	135,000*	100,000
FONTANA D/C*/B**	-	90,000/150,000*/280,000**
FOREST HILLS A/B*/C**	200,000	230,000/300,000*/325,000**
MAKATI SPORTS A/B*	290,000	270,000/300,000*
MANILA POLO CLUB	2.75M	2.9M
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A/B*	650,000/730,000*	700,000/750,000*
METROPOLITAN A/B*	-	120,000/125,000*
MIMOSA IND./C2*/C3**	120,000/200,000*	155,000/265,000*/350,000*
MT. MALARAYAT A/C*	-	350,000/525,000*
ORCHARD A/B*/C**	200,000	230,000/350,000*/425,000**
PUERTO AZUL	-	135,000
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	200,000	225,000
RIVERA A/B*	-	195,000/400,000*
ROCKWELL CLUB	450,000	500,000
ROYALE TAGAYTAY A/B*/C**	-	90,000/150,000*/160,000**
SHERWOOD HILLS A/B*/C**	-	150,000/250,000*/350,000**
STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB A/B*	1.625M/2.1M*	1.75M
SUBIC BAY IND./CORP.*	290,000*	200,000/350,000*
TAT FILIPINAS GOLF A/B*	-	350,000/550,000*
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS CC/GOLF*	400,000/850,000*	425,000/900,000*
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	750,000	780,000
VALLE VERDE IND.	160,000	170,000
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Need Lessor: Manila Golf (Urgent), Eagleridge B

Selling: Villas, Belleview, Pinecrest & Woodlands in Tagaytay Highlands

Lots: Eagleridge, Forest Hills, Punta Fuego, Royale Tagaytay & Southwoods

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Group urges use of new shipping service

By Abigail L. Ho

THE COALITION for Shipping and Ports Modernization has urged the Department of Transportation and Communications to pass an administrative order promoting the use of the roll on-roll off (Roro) service in domestic shipping as this could cut shipping costs by as much as 46 percent.

Under the proposed administrative order, there would no longer be any need for arrastre and stevedoring services in ports using the Roro system.

CSPM member Enrico Basilio said arrastre and stevedoring expenses accounted for as much as 46 percent of the cost of shipping goods via water.

He said this made it as expensive—or even more expensive, in some cases—for goods to be transported by air.

Arrastre pertains to cargo handling on land, before the shipment is placed on the vessel. Stevedoring, on the other hand, refers to cargo handling aboard the ship.

The Philippine Ports Authority, Basilio said, reasoned that the Roro system could not get widespread implementation as it would displace a lot of port workers since it had no need for cargo handlers.

With the Roro system, there would no longer be a need for cargo-handling services as cargo would just be "rolled" onto a vessel.

But Basilio explained that the Roro system did not aim to replace the existing load on-load off system that is widely used in the country.

"It merely offers an alternative for shippers who do not want to pay so much to have their goods shipped," Basilio said.

The proposed administrative order also aims to rationalize the tariff structure for goods shipment.

At present, vehicles transporting goods via Roro vessels are charged based on the type or commodity class of their cargo. Under the administrative order, charges would be based on the lane-meter length of the vehicle or the space it actually occupies on the ship.

Roro links would also be "considered as part of the national road network system."

With this in place, vehicles to be brought to provinces by its owners aboard ships would not have to acquire specific permits that take a lot of time and red tape to secure, Basilio explained.

Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez has yet to sign the proposed administrative order, which had been drafted last April 15.

"He said he still needed to study the Roro system more carefully before signing," Basilio said.

Study says RP port tariffs remain low

PORT tariff levels in the Philippines are the lowest in the Asia-Pacific region but that doesn't make the country really competitive in the highly globalized and almost borderless world trade.

That's because while wharfage, cargo handling and other port charges are low, Philippine port facilities are not as modern as those of many neighboring Asian countries. Government needs billions of dollars to put Philippine ports at par with those of most countries in the region but cannot raise enough resources either from taxes or port tariff collections to fund its port modernization and expansion program.

And efforts to hike tariff rates have always been met with opposition from shipping companies, exporters and importers.

Yet, a comparative analysis by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Escap) of port tariffs in the region showed that total port costs for a 3,000 twenty-feet equivalent units (TEU) container ship, including cargo handling, are lowest in Manila based on nominal exchange rates.

The Escap study, released in New York early this year, involved 21 ports in Australia, China (including Hong Kong), India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Sri

STUDY/B4

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Philweb given option to buy into Alcorn Gold

HOLDING firm Alcorn Gold Resources Corp. has given former Trade Minister Roberto Ongpin's Internet upstart Philweb.com the option to acquire 40 percent of its total equity in exchange for the latter's infusion of new investment opportunities in the high-technology and gaming sectors.

On top of the new deal with Philweb, AGRC yesterday disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange that the Puregold group of businessman Lucio Co would pump in some P575 million in additional equity, to be taken out of an increase in AGRC's capital stock to P2.3 billion from P700 million.

The new private placement by the Puregold group, equivalent to 57.5 billion additional shares, will jack up its stake in AGRC to more than 90 percent from the existing 35 percent, analysts estimated. With the increase in equity, the Puregold group will still become the biggest stockholder in AGRC once its holdings are diluted by the entry of Ongpin's group.

Under their memorandum of agreement, Philweb will identify suitable investment opportunities for AGRC in gaming, information technology, media, telecommunications or similar industry. Philweb will also negotiate with investors for such ventures, similar to the earlier deal with dormant Itogon-Suyoc Mines Inc., which has remained controversial up to now.

Any project identified by Philweb will be subject to the approval of AGRC's board and, if required, of its stockholders. Upon such approval, Ongpin will likewise be elected chair of AGRC while present chair Luis Co Chi Kiat will be named chair emeritus.

Philweb, for its part, will make a partial payment equivalent to 25 percent of the expanded capital of AGRC. The option to increase its stake to 40 percent will be exercised only after the approval of the new investment and be valid for three years, the disclosures said.

AGRC approved the increase in its authorized capital stock as early as July 2000, when it also passed a resolution to conduct a rights offering of P100 million of the unissued authorized capital stock at a ratio of one share for every six held.

However, the implementation of these fund-raising activities was deferred due to the adverse economic conditions.

"Current economic forecasts indicate an improving business climate both locally and worldwide. The implementation of the approved increase in authorized capital positions the company to benefit from this stronger economy," AGRC general manager Ponciano Mathay said yesterday.

AGRC, formerly known as oil exploration firm Alcorn Petroleum and Minerals Corp. before it was transformed last year into a holding firm, was widely speculated by the market to be the backdoor-listing vehicle of the Puregold stores.

Banco de Oro sets IPO price at ₱20.80

SY

RETAIL tycoon Henry Sy's Banco de Oro Universal Bank yesterday priced the initial public offering at P20.80 per share, bringing the value of its total offering to P1.85 billion.

The final price set after the book-building was exactly at the mid-point of the P17.80 to P23.80 price tag earlier indicated by the bank.

BDO is offering to the public a total of 89.04 million shares, consisting of primary and secondary offering equivalent to 32.69 million and 56.35 million shares, respectively.

After the IPO, the bank will have a total of 952.7 million outstanding common shares.

BDO is scheduled to conduct the IPO from May 6 to 10 and then list its shares on the main board of the PSE on May 21. BPI Capital Corp. is the underwriter.

The bank's IPO will also mark the second venture of the SM group for this year alone. Newly listed Highlands Prime Inc. is likewise majority controlled by the Sy family, alongside two other listed companies: retail giant SM Prime Holdings Inc. and property developer SM Development Corp.

BDO will be the fourth local company to list on the PSE this year, after Citystate Savings Bank, Salcon Power Corp. and Highlands Prime.

Proceeds from the primary offering will be used by the bank to increase trading accounts and subsequently to support lending and expansion activities.

Bourse okays IPO of property firm

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange has approved the initial public offering of property firm Jolliville Holdings Corp., the fifth company to debut at the local bourse this year.

A PSE circular issued yesterday said Jolliville's offer would start on May 16 and end on May 28. It will then list on the second board of the local stock exchange on June 17.

Jolliville's IPO will come after the P1.85-billion offering of Banco de Oro Universal Bank in early May and its listing on May 21. The three other companies that listed on the PSE this year earlier were Citystate Savings Bank, Salcon Power Corp. and Highlands Prime Inc.

The property company is offering a total of 94.3 million or 33.5 percent of its 281.5 million common shares at a price of P1.09 per share. Of the total offering, 34 percent (30 million shares) will consist of primary shares while 66 percent (64.3 million shares) will consist of secondary shares.

The estimated net proceeds from the primary offer amounting to P30.46 million will be used to fund the immediate rehabilitation program of Calapan Waterworks System and Development Corp. Specifically, the company plans to reevaluate the project's engineering designs, replace defective pipelines and service connections, upgrade and construct new wells and pump facilities and install water treatment chlorinators.

The P65.03 million to be raised from the secondary offering will go to the following selling shareholders: Elgeete Holdings Inc.; Febra Resources Corp.; A-Net Resources Corp.; Kenly Resources Inc. and Oltru Holdings Corp.

The issue manager and underwriter for the IPO is Keppel IVI Inc.

Jolliville is controlled by the family of Jolly Ting, owner of high-end men's clubs Pegasus, Lexus and Genie.

Study says . . .

From page B3

Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

Using exchange rates to convert the local currency values of port charges in the selected ports in these countries, the Escap found that Manila total port charges for a 3,000 TEU container ship for seven days of dwell time to load and unload cargo are about one-sixth of the charges in Japan's Port of Yokohama, one-fourth of the cost in Hong Kong, and nearly a third of the rates in Sri Lanka.

Compared with those in Manila, port charges are higher by 33 percent in Indonesia, 50 percent in Malaysia, 60 percent in Vietnam and 80 percent in India and Pakistan, the Escap said in its evaluation.

While stressing the need to identify the main causes of the great disparities in prices, Escap also took note of the increasing requirement for ports to be financially viable and sustainable.

It noted, however, that in most countries including the Philippines, adjustment of port tariffs normally goes through a lengthy process requiring government approval. This, the Escap said, not only serves as a disincentive to port operators and potential private-sector investors in port modernization, but also can be problematic for port users.

Which is exactly the case with the calls for a rollback of the 10-percent increase in stevedoring and arrastre charges in Philippine ports supposed to have taken effect last February.

DISCLOSURES

ELECTED directors of **SM Prime Holdings Inc.** were Henry Sy Sr., Jose Cuisia Jr., Senen Mendiola, Teresita Sy, Henry Sy Jr., Herbert Sy and Hans Sy. Also, the company declared a regular cash dividend of P0.07 per share and a special cash dividend of P0.03 per share for shareholders of record as of May 27. The dividends are payable on or before June 15.

* * *

APPOINTED members of **Filinvest Land Inc.'s** executive committee were Kanokvalee Viriyaprapaikit, Lim Swe Guan, Joseph Yap, Mercedes Gotianun and Andrew Gotianun Jr. The company disclosed it would increase its authorized capital stock from P6 billion to P10 billion.

* * *

THE ANNUAL stockholders' meeting of **First eBank** scheduled for May 21 was moved to a later date.

* * *

LA TONDEÑA Distillers Inc. repurchased 1.25 million of its shares at P29 per share and another 3.2 million at P29.50 per share.

* * *

A.BROWN Co. Inc. bought 100,000 of its own shares at P0.45 per share.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Manila Jockey Club Inc.** were Pedro Tan, Alfonso Reyno Jr., Alfonso Victorio Reyno III, Henry Cua Loping, Mariza Santos-Tan, Patrick Reyno, Juanita Uy Tan, Christopher Reyno and Martin Cepeda. The company's authorized capital stock shall be increased from P100 million to P300 million.

* * *

DONALD Lee resigned as president and director of **MBf Inc.** Elected to replace him was Yap Boon Teck.

* * *

CHINA Banking Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 9, 4 p.m. at the penthouse of China Bank Building, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of April 23 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

LORENZO Shipping Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 29, 9 a.m. at the Dusit Hotel, Makati City.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Monday, April 29, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	67.5	68	67	68	734,000
China Banking Corp.	625	625	625	625	180
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	35.5	35.5	33.5	34.5	1,277,500
First E-Bank Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	15,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	38.5	38.5	36.5	38	582,000
Philippine National Bank	54	54	53	54	1,800
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	12,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.38	1.4	1.38	1.4	284,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1380	1380	1380	1380	2,620
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.9	0.91	0.9	0.91	30,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1060	1070	1060	1070	20,210
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	30	30	28	28	11,100
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	340,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	640	640	640	640	1,130
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.041	0.042	0.041	0.042	1,100,000
Piltel	0.44	0.44	0.43	0.43	2,050,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	467.5	467.5	450	450	158,440
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.018	0.019	0.018	0.019	44,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	24	24	23	23.5	77,100
Manila Electric Co. B	39.5	39.5	36.5	37	3,937,700
Petron Corp.	1.52	1.56	1.5	1.5	3,587,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.66	1.7	1.64	1.7	313,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	30,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	423,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	660,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.25	13.5	13.25	13.5	408,400
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	29	30.5	29	30	5,951,900
RFM Corp.	1.26	1.28	1.26	1.28	1,749,000
San Miguel Corp. A	48	50	47.5	50	147,300
San Miguel Corp. B	55.5	58	55	58	763,900
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	60,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	10,000
Ayala Corp.	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.7	1,052,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	10,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12	12	12	12	500
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	370,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.009	0.011	0.009	0.01	539,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	5,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	100,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.58	4,020,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	250,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	300,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	210,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	10,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.4	1.48	1.4	1.42	1,016,000
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	26	26.5	25.5	26.5	161,200
Ionics Inc.	7	7	7	7	84,000
Keppel Phil. Holdings	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	2,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.011	0.018	0.011	0.018	5,100,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.82	0.82	0.81	0.82	2,830,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	500,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	30,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,270,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	840,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	10,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	850,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	230,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.5	0.65	0.5	0.65	20,000
Pryce Corp.	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	300,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.52	0.53	0.52	0.52	1,440,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	320,000
Philippine Racing Club	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	500,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	30.5	30.5	27.5	28	911,400
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	775	775	775	775	300
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	695	710	695	710	390
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	24,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	10,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	8	8	8	8	200,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.7	6.7	6.5	6.6	7,422,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	460,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	50,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	800,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.6	2.75	2.6	2.65	13,966,000
Highlands Prime Leisure	2.06	2.06	2.06	2.06	1,288,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	200,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.06	0.06	0.055	0.055	1,000,000
SM Development Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	10,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.2	6.2	5.9	5.9	16,541,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	2,100,000
UrbanCorp Realty Dev. Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	60,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	10,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines Inc.	0.044	0.044	0.041	0.041	26,200,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.215	2,510,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	2,050,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	3,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	18,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	100,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	1,000,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	7,400,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.004	0.004	146,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0042	0.0042	0.0038	0.0038	62,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	20,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	20,000
Pacifica	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	1,000,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	10,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	2,901,310	141,889,400.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	662,237,880	522,512,350.00
PRO	43,887,000	188,426,730.00
Mining	52,870,000	2,521,600.00
OIL	216,450,000	971,900.00
GRAND TOTALS:	978,406,170	856,121,980.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	544.83	DOWN 3.52
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,777.36	DOWN 10.81
PRO	578.40	DOWN 19.02
Mining	1,339.75	UP 45.05
OIL	1.34	DOWN 0.04
All Shares Index	738.80	DOWN 7.08
Composite	1,315.01	DOWN 8.95

NO. OF ADVANCES: 23; NO. OF DECLINES: 43; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 33; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 99; NO. OF TRADES: 2,632

CURRENCIES

April 29, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.108402	1.000000	50.8330
Japan	Yen	0.008670	0.007822	0.3976
United Kingdom	Pound	1.615939	1.457900	74.1094
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.142117	0.128218	6.5177
Switzerland	Franc	0.682052	0.615347	31.2799
Canada	Dollar	0.709786	0.640369	32.5519
Singapore	Dollar	0.614583	0.554477	28.1857
Australia	Dollar	0.601738	0.542888	27.5966
Bahrain	Dinar	2.940214	2.652661	134.8427
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.295574	0.266667	13.5555
Brunei	Dollar	0.610521	0.550812	27.9994
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000120	0.000108	0.0055
Thailand	Baht	0.025657	0.023148	1.1767
UAE	Dirham	0.301787	0.272272	13.8404
Korea	Won	0.000861	0.000777	0.0395
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.902200	45.8615
Brazil	Real	0.469662	0.423729	21.5394
Denmark	Kroner	0.134466	0.121315	6.1668
India	Rupee	0.022671	0.020454	1.0397
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.291685	0.263158	13.3771
Mexico	New Peso	0.118660	0.107055	5.4419
New Zealand	Dollar	0.498337	0.449600	22.8545
Norway	Kroner	0.132119	0.119198	6.0592
Pakistan	Rupee	0.018519	0.016708	0.8493
South Africa	Rand	0.103783	0.093633	4.7596
Sweden	Kroner	0.108377	0.097778	4.9703
Syria	Pound	0.025191	0.022727	1.1553
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.031970	0.028843	1.4662
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001319	0.001190	0.0605

G & W clubshares
SEC License Broker No.: A-17597
As of April 30, 2002

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club "A"	1,700,000	-
Alabang Country Club "B"	1,800,000	-
Alta Vista	-	300,000
Baguio Country Club	740,000	700,000
Camp John Hay	280,000	260,000
Capitol Hills Golf & CC	130,000	116,000
Canyon Woods	200,000	-
Calatagan Golf Club	100,000	-
City Sports Club	630,000	Pls. Call
Eagleridge "A"	350,000	330,000
Eastridge	200,000	-
Evercrest	100,000	-
Fairways & Blue Waters	800,000	-
Fontana C/C	90,000/140,000	Pls. Call
Forest Hills "A"	230,000	200,000
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	-
Manila Golf	-	10,000,000
Manila Polo	2,900,000	2,800,000
Makati Sports Club	300,000	250,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	650,000	-
Metropolitan Club	-	95,000
Mimosa Golf Ind./C3	150,000/300,000	-
Mt. Malarayat	360,000	-
Orchard	210,000	-
Phil. Columbian	80,000	-
Punta Fuego	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Puerto Azul "B"	170,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club "A"	240,000	190,000
Riviera Golf "A"/"C"	300,000/450,000	-
Riviera Golf "B"	[illegible]	-
Rockwell	-	370,000
Royale Tagaytay A/C	[illegible]	Pls. Call
Sherwoods	[illegible]	-
Subic Bay Yacht Club "Corp"	[illegible]	330,000
Subic Golf	[illegible]	-
Tagaytay Country Club	[illegible]	380,000
Tagaytay Highlands Golf & CC	[illegible]	-
Tagaytay Midlands	[illegible]	[illegible]
Valley Golf & CC	-	[illegible]
Valle Verde (Indv.)	170,000	-
Wack Wack Golf	7,000,000	-

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SEC LICENSE # A 1998-2129
AS OF APRIL 29, 2002

	SELLING	BUYING
1. ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	1,700,000	1,600,000
2. ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,780,000	1,700,000
3. BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	750,000	650,000
4. CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	90,000	
5. CAMP JOHN HAY	300,000	250,000
6. CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	600,000	
7. CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	130,000	120,000
8. CELEBRITY CLUB	190,000	175,000
9. COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS		370,000
10. CLUB FILIPINO	210,000	200,000
11. EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	200,000	
12. EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	350,000	330,000
13. EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	100,000	
14. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	220,000	200,000
15. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	280,000	
16. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	500,000	
17. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	280,000	250,000
18. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	300,000	
19. MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.)		10,500,00
20. MANILA POLO CLUB	2,600,000	2,850,000
21. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	650,000	620,000
22. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	750,000	700,000
23. METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	140,000	
24. METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	150,000	
25. MT. MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.)	350,000	
26. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	230,000	200,000
27. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	250,000	
28. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	370,000	
29. QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	230,000	200,000
30. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	200,000	
31. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	260,000	210,000
32. STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	1,800,000	
33. SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND)	250,000	
34. TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L. GOLF CLUB		850,000
35. TAGAYTAY MIDLAND		760,000
36. VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB	170,000	150,000
37. VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	240,000	230,000
38. WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		6,500,0

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Pre-qualification requirements may be obtained from the Planning Department. There will be a pre-bidding conference on May 10, 2002, 2:00 p.m. at the 4th floor, Citibank Center, Citibank Plaza, 8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City 1200. Deadline for submission of bids is on May 24, 2002 at 2:00 p.m.

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(Sgd.) LILIAN I. SERNA
Vice President, MIS and Planning Sector
Chairperson, Committee for the Preparation of the 2001 Annual Report

Selling souvenirs makes good business, fulfills mission too

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

SUCCESS STORY

WHEN the 20-year-old Jay Aldeguer graduated from the Ateneo de Manila University, he and a friend went on a backpacking trip to Europe and started collecting shirts as souvenirs of all the places they visited.

Aldeguer was amazed at the variety of shirts he got. When he came back to the Philippines, he attempted to do the same when he went all around the country.

Sadly, there was no such variety in the country in 1991. The souvenir shirt he saw in Baguio was almost the same as the one he got when he was 10 years old.

The entrepreneur in Aldeguer thought that there must be a whole market out there looking for souvenir shirts but could not find any of quality like him.

Filling the gap

He then decided to fill that gap and "Islands Souvenirs" was born.

With P500,000 in capital that he got from his parents and his own savings, Aldeguer set up the Cebu-based shop.

Islands Souvenirs has since become synonymous with souvenirs. From shirts, the product line has expanded to include other products like bags, hats, mugs, keychains and beach wear.

"It was quite easy setting it up because my parents were already in the shirt business and I was familiar with it," Aldeguer said in an interview.

He added that there was indeed a market for quality souvenir items, not just the shirts produced by small backyard operators. Attention was paid to quality and to the designs of the shirts.

Starting young

Aldeguer started selling when he was still in school taking up Interdisciplinary Studies. Whenever he needed to augment his allowance, he would sell shirts that his parents' company manufactured to his classmates.

"The backpack that I used in school was always filled with eight to 10 shirts of different colors. I'd take them out and show them to my classmates, and get their orders for delivery the next day," Aldeguer recalled.

Setting up Islands Souvenirs, however, took a lot more than just bringing different colored shirts.

Aldeguer's vision is to immortalize the Philippine tropical island experience through colorful shirts.

Island
venirs
ALDEGUER in front of one of his stores.

Islands Souvenirs' products revolve around major tourist destinations such as Baguio, Subic, Batangas, Manila, Palawan, Cebu, Mactan, Bohol, Iloilo, Bacolod, Camiguin, Boracay, Davao, Cagayan de Oro and Zamboanga.

Leading brand

From a single store in Cebu in 1992, the company has grown in 10 years to become the leading souvenir brand now with stores not only in the Philippines, but also overseas, particularly Okinawa and Saipan.

"I believe that we are the only company that offers high quality and branded souvenir shirts in the market, not just here in the Philippines but also in other countries," Aldeguer says.

For its efforts to come up with quality products and, at the same time, help promote Philippine tourism, Islands Souvenirs has been cited as a World Class Filipino Retailer by the Philippine Retailers Association and the Department of trade and Industry.

Islands Souvenirs was chosen because of its visual merchandising, operational excellence, customer service and store concept. Aldeguer, for his part, was named "Outstanding Young Filipino" for business entrpreneurship in 1997 by then President Fidel V. Ramos.

Like any true entrepreneur, Aldeguer is not about to stop looking for other business opportunities, and he saw one in the publishing business.

Diversification

Aldeguer's Islands Media Inc. is now on the third issue of its magazine simply titled CeBu!, which reflects Aldeguer's passion for his hometown.

"I have always felt strongly for Cebu. I always wanted to give it the push it needed and I felt that publishing a magazine would be the perfect medium to showcase the island," Aldeguer says.

CeBu was enthusiastically welcomed by the Cebuanos and businessmen with interests in the island province, saying it was about time that Cebu got another push to help bring back its boom days.

As an insider's guide to Cebu, the bi-monthly magazine presents articles or columns that will benefit those visiting Cebu, whether for business or leisure, and Cebu residents who want to learn more about the island and what it offers.

Mission

"The magazine endeavors to unveil the uniqueness of Cebu to both the Cebuanos and non-Cebuanos; to help them discover and help us rediscover the wonders of our beautiful place," Aldeguer said in a statement when CeBu was launched.

Aldeguer admits that he knows next to nothing about putting together a magazine, but he says that the learning process is very fulfilling, and he is hungry for more.

"Everybody tells me it is a difficult business and I will not make money. However, the response I am getting is very encouraging and this helps me endure," Aldeguer says.

He adds that CeBu is not just a business to him, but a mission to help win back tourists not just to Cebu but to the Philippines.

BSP shelves plan to cut single borrowers' limit

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has junked an earlier plan to reduce the single borrower's limit on banks to 15 percent from 25 percent to avoid adding constraints to banking industry's lending activities.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said that while the policy-making Monetary Board was allowed by the General Banking Act of June 2000 to reduce the exposure of banks to a single borrower, it was also given the flexibility to determine what was best for the banking sector.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura agreed that the central bank should not further constrain the banks' lending activities through cutting the single borrower's limit by 10 percentage points.

"The board is not inclined to cut the SBL anymore because it thinks it will only reduce further the banks' flexibility to lend which is already constrained by their high bad loan levels," said Reyes.

The deputy governor said, however, that the plan to redefine the coverage of a single borrower to include not only a company but all its subsidiaries was still being pursued.

He said the BSP might redefine a single corporate borrower as one that belongs to a group with the same shareholders. Currently, a corporation is treated independently from its affiliates and subsidiaries.

Reyes said the central bank would issue three new circulars before the end of the first semester, which would include a stricter policy on single exposure and a tighter policy on insider lending and unsound banking practices.

"We are finalizing these circulars. We have asked the banks and the BSP officers to comment on them," said Reyes.

Reyes said these new policies should strengthen the banking system and help prevent bank failures.

Buenaventura said the central bank was determined to raise the governance standards of banks to avert bank failures caused by abuses committed by people running the banks.

Reyes explained that by tightening the definition of a single corporate borrower, the loan defaults arising from affiliate groups could be prevented.

However, the new definition, if approved, could also mean difficulties for companies in accessing credits.

On the policy on directors, officers, shareholders and related interests or Dosri, the BSP wanted to align the limit on credit to related interests to a similar policy on directors, officers and shareholders. These three groups are allowed to borrow from the bank only an amount equivalent to their deposits and shareholdings.

Reyes said there was also a plan to tighten the ceiling on Dosri lending. The central bank prohibits a bank from lending more than 15 percent of its unimpaired capital to Dosri.

Pagcor, DOE sign loan facility guidelines

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. will sign today the guidelines for a P300-million loan fund to help small investors put up oil/gasoline refilling stations.

Energy. Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said yesterday that the fund was ready since last month when the two agencies inked a memorandum of agreement.

"This fund is for small investors. They can borrow as much as P5 million to set up a gasoline station," Perez explained.

He explained that the program excluded investors who wanted to put up a gas station for any of the Big Three—Petron Corp., Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Caltex Philippines Inc.

The official said the setting up of the fund was pursuant to Section 10 of the Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Act, which mandates the promotion of retail competition.

"We will be working with the Technology and Livelihood Resource Center and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority to train interested investors in putting up, operating and maintaining the stations," Perez said.

He added that the energy department would coordinate with new oil firms and associations of petroleum dealers in formulating and implementing the program.

GOINGS-ON

All-import store

CUEVASVILLE Realty & Development Corp. will open Kristine, an in-house department store of Cuevasville Plaza (FRC Mall), the company's first mall project in Bacoor, Cavite.

Kristine will open shop on May 1 to offer wide-ranging products imported from Europe, the United States and neighboring Asian countries at affordable prices.

Cuevasville assures the public that prices are within everybody's reach because it has devised a pricing system that substantially lowers the prices of its products while still maintaining modest returns. The pricing system is part of the company's corporate commitment to make quality products affordable to the public.

Kristine, located on the third floor of Cuevasville Plaza (FRC Mall), is a welcome addition to the Bacoor mall which recently opened its state-of-the-art cinemas.

SEC's iRegister

BUSINESSES can now register with the Securities and Exchange Commission anytime and from anywhere using iRegister, the recently launched online company registration system.

Accessible through SEC's website, sec.gov.ph, the service also allows the verification and registration of company names online.

The SEC iRegister project is part of the agency's P165-million computerization program. It was undertaken by technology giant Sun Microsystems Phils. Inc. (SunPhil) in partnership with 25by8, a fast-growing enterprise software solutions provider led by Orlando B. Vea, founder and former CEO of Smart Communications.

Philips Philippines' victory

IT was a double victory for Philips Semiconductors Philippines when its teams from Cabuyao and Calamba emerged as the champions in Philips' Quality Improvement Competition (QIC) World Finals held recently in Barcelona, Spain.

The victory marked the first time that both teams from Philips Philippines won the QIC award at the same time. The team from Philips Semiconductors Cabuyao emerged as the QIC 2002 world champion, while Philips Semiconductors Calamba won the Vox Populi (Peope's Choice) award.

The annual Philips Quality Improvement Competition aims to recognize quality improvement programs in various Philips Semiconductor manufacturing facilities worldwide.

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MEGALINK

Asian free trade results need to match rhetoric

TOKYO—Politicians across Asia are banging the drum louder than ever for bilateral and regional free trade agreements, but many policy experts remain skeptical that the results will match up to the rhetoric any time soon.

To the dismay of critics who see regional pacts as stumbling blocks rather than building blocks to global free trade, the push for various Asian trade alliances has intensified despite the launch in November of a new round of multilateral market-opening negotiations under the umbrella of the World Trade Organization.

Chinese Vice President Hu Jintao and Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong agreed last Friday on the need for a quick start to talks on a China-Asean free trade agreement (FTA). Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has said he wants to explore an FTA with Australia during a visit to Canberra on Tuesday.

A trade deal would be part of Koizumi's vision of a vast comprehensive economic partnership that would also embrace China, South Korea, New Zealand and the 10 members of Asean, the Association of South East Asian Nations—an initiative floated soon after China and Asean agreed in November to work on an FTA.

Policy experts say the flurry of activity is significant because it reflected Asia's recognition of the risk of becoming too reliant on economic ties with the United States as well as the need for cohesion to counter the influence of the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta) and the European Union.

But they also fret that politicians are underestimating the scale of the task they have set themselves. Apart from Asean's fear that free trade with China would ravage its labor-intensive industries, skeptics wonder how Korea and Japan can conceive of free trade with commodity producers like Australia and Asean when their powerful farmers remain implacably opposed to more imports.

"Unless both Japan and Korea solve the domestic agricultural issue both politically and economically, we cannot really get serious about FTAs," Lee Chang Jae of the Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP) told a recent conference in Tokyo on Asian economic integration.

Korea explored the possibility of a free trade deal with Chile—which last week signed an FTA with the EU—but the effort got nowhere because of opposition from its farmers.

Whereas critics say Koizumi's trade diplomacy is driven by fear of losing regional leadership to an increasingly self-confident China, officials in Tokyo portray it as a lever the prime minister is using deliberately to force vested interests at home to open protected markets.

In a notable victory for trade liberalizers, Japan refrained last year from retaliating against a flood of cheap imports from China of leeks, mushrooms and reeds used to make tatami mats.

Still, Melina Nathan of the Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies in Singapore said there was a sense in Southeast Asia that Japan was too enfeebled to provide true leadership and was simply going through the motions.

"The perception in this part of the world is that Japan is just treading water right now and that it can't really deliver because its own economy is in such dire straits," Nathan told Reuters.

Naoko Munakata, a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, agreed that Japan's political leadership was not strong enough to permit bold trade gestures.

"But that doesn't mean we should do nothing. We should grab any opportunity that arrives," Munakata said.

Addressing the Asian integration conference, Munakata cited Japan's FTA with Singapore, its first ever, as a case in point.

Out of deference to Japan's farm lobby, the deal signed in January did not reduce tariffs on Singapore's exports of goldfish and orchids. But agriculture, hitherto off-limits, was technically not excluded. Creating this pinhole, said Munakata, who worked on the FTA, made a huge impact on Japan's bureaucracy.

"We have to be politically pragmatic to make progress. Where there is an opportunity, we have to make an effort," she said. Mexico would be next on Japan's FTA wishlist, Munakata added.

Reuters

ARGENTINE President Eduardo Duhalde, left, talks with his new Economy Minister Roberto Lavagna at the Buenos Aires Government House after Argentina's president swore in former diplomat and trade expert Lavagna on Saturday, April 27, as his second economy minister in three months.
AP

All eyes on the peso's value as banks open in Argentina

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—New Economy Minister Roberto Lavagna faced his first test in Argentina's markets, with the country's financial system returning to service Monday after a week-long shutdown ordered to avoid a banking collapse.

Banks were resuming full operations and foreign-exchange markets were opening following 10 dramatic days in which former Economy Minister Jorge Remes Lenicov resigned and the country's financial system teetered on the brink of collapse.

The Central Bank ordered banks to shut down April 19, saying they would reopen only after Congress passed legislation to halt the daily withdrawal of $50 million from the banks.

On Thursday, lawmakers approved a bill that prevents savers who have won lawsuits against a four-month-old banking freeze from collecting their deposits until the government can appeal.

Observers say the law will sharply reduce the level of deposits being withdrawn in the coming weeks, preventing any imminent financial collapse.

A banking freeze was imposed Dec. 1 by the government of former President Fernando De la Rua amid an economic crisis that deepened at the turn of the year when Argentina defaulted on its $141-billion public debt and its currency dropped steeply in value.

Most Argentines were expected to be anxiously watching exchange markets Monday for any further slide in the peso's value.

President Eduardo Duhalde allowed the peso to float on the marketplace in January. Its value has dropped from 1 to $1 to $3.10 to $1.

On the black market last week, the peso was trading at 3.50 and above, encouraging some to call for Lavagna, who took over Saturday, to fix the peso's value.

However, in an interview with local daily Clarin published Sunday, Lavagna ruled out any such measure for now, arguing that the peso was already overvalued and unlikely to fall further.

"There will not be any type of fixed exchange rate but full freedom of the markets," Lavagna said.

Later Sunday, however, after a meeting with Central Bank President Mario Blejer, he said authorities would act to prop up the peso if necessary.

Lavagna, a foreign-trade specialist who previously served as Argentina's ambassador to the European Union, also made clear the government must move swiftly to implement several measures that have been demanded by the International Monetary Fund as conditions for further financial aid.

Firmly rejecting talk that Argentina should cut ties with the IMF, Lavagna said he would speak Monday with IMF Managing Director Horst Kohler.

He said an agreement last week between the government and provincial governors set out the deficit-reduction policies and economic reforms demanded by the IMF.

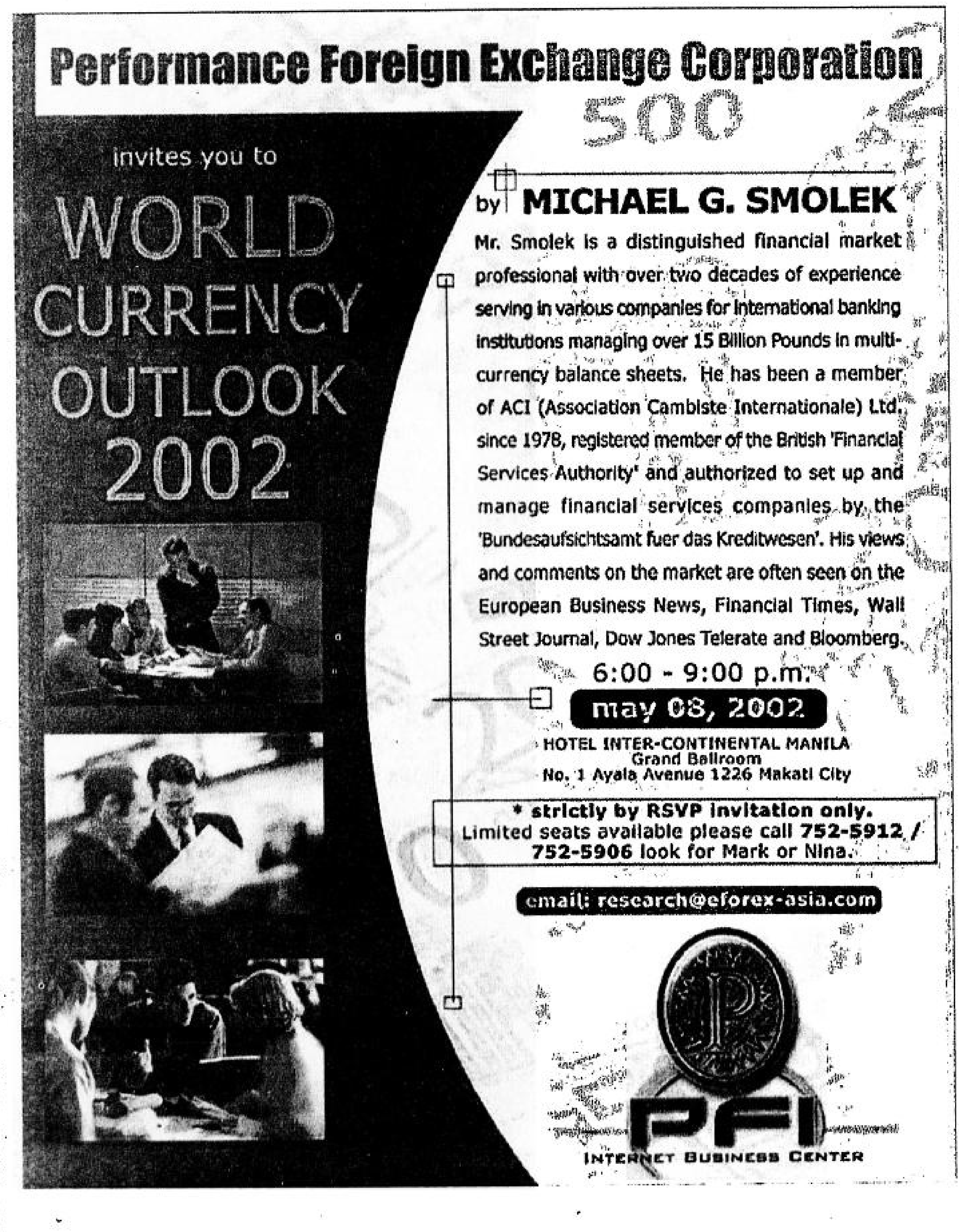
"There are more things (in the agreement) than the Fund has been asking us for," he told Argentine daily La Nacion in a separate interview published Sunday.

Lavagna also said he hoped to have a plan in place to lift the deeply unpopular banking freeze by June. The freeze helped contribute to Remes Lenicov's downfall.

Lavagna said the plan would involve the state and the private banks coming together to guarantee people's savings and gradually return them as the economic climate improves.

Argentina is currently in a four-year recession that has seen unemployment reach 18.3 percent. This year, most estimates say gross domestic product will shrink between 10 and 15 percent.

AP



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by MICHAEL G. SMOLEK
Mr. Smolek is a distinguished financial market professional with over two decades of experience serving in various companies for international banking institutions managing over 15 Billion Pounds in multi-currency balance sheets. He has been a member of ACI (Association Cambiste Internationale) Ltd. since 1978, registered member of the British 'Financial Services Authority' and authorized to set up and manage financial services companies by the 'Bundesaufsichtsamt fuer das Kreditwesen'. His views and comments on the market are often seen on the European Business News, Financial Times, Wall Street Journal, Dow Jones Telerate and Bloomberg.
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Korea says economy not overheating, recovery seen in Q2

SEOUL—South Korea's Finance Ministry said on Monday the economy was not overheating and a full-fledged recovery was expected to occur in the second quarter.

The governor of the central Bank of Korea said in mid-April there was a danger that South Korea's economy could start overheating if exports maintain an upward momentum this year.

The bank forecast an 8.4 percent rise year on year in 2002 exports, led by wireless telecom equipment, semiconductors, computers and automobiles.

The central bank upgraded its 2002 economic growth forecast to 5.7 percent from an earlier projection of 3.9 percent compared with a 3-percent rise in 2001.

The ministry said in a statement circulated ahead of a meeting with officials of state-run research institutes that its macroeconomic policy would focus on maintaining the economy's current upward momentum.

The ministry also said chances were low that global oil prices would top $30 per barrel.

Korea imports all of its oil and would be among the worst hit in Asia if Brent oil prices rise above $30 per barrel, analysts have said.

Reuters

Pricewaterhouse unit blockbuster IPO seen

NEW YORK—Accounting giant PricewaterhouseCoopers could file as soon as this week to launch a blockbuster initial public offering of up to $9 billion for its consulting division, sources familiar with the company's plans told Reuters.

PWC partners in the United States and Britain voted on Friday to go ahead with the IPO on the New York Stock Exchange (news—websites), a major step forward in its plan for what will be by far the largest IPO on Wall Street so far this year.

Votes continue to be counted for smaller territories, but those partners are expected to approve the deal, clearing the way for a filing as early as this week, sources said.

The final value of the deal could change, but sources said it could be as high as $9 billion, which could more than double the value of the largest IPO to date this year, the $4.3 billion sale of Citigroup Inc.'s Travelers Property Casualty Corp.

Reuters

GM to sign takeover deal with Korea's Daewoo Co.

SEOUL, South Korea—US auto giant General Motors Corp. will sign a $1.2-billion deal this week to take over South Korea's Daewoo Motor Co., the South Korean automaker said Monday.

Daewoo spokesperson Kim Sang-won said the signing is scheduled for Tuesday by GM chair Jack Smith, Daewoo chair Lee Jong-dae and Jung Keun-young, head of the state-run Korea Development Bank, Daewoo's main creditor bank.

GM signed a preliminary deal to take over Daewoo in September. It had hoped to complete the purchase by the end of 2001, but negotiations dragged on because of differences over financial details.

AP

LAWRENCE Klein, professor emeritus of the University of Pennsylvania and the 1980 Nobel Laureate in Economics, speaks to the media at a press conference at United Nations headquarters. Declaring that the world economy is "on the mend," the United Nations on Thursday predicted global economic growth of 1.8 percent this year rising to about 3 percent next year—providing there are no major shocks. AP

Rising oil prices bad news for Wall Street investors

NEW YORK—Wall Street is having a flashback—to the 1970s.

Investors, casting a nervous eye on rising oil prices, are worried about escalating violence in the Middle East.

But the economic backdrop now is nowhere as bleak as in 1973, when the Arab oil embargo choked Western economies, causing gasoline rationing with long lines at the gas pumps, and triggering a deep bear market. Some pundits, however, fear the oil factor could again depress stock prices.

"There is an inverse historical relationship between the stock market and oil prices," said Fadel Gheit, oil equities analyst with brokerage Fahnestock & Co. "Low oil prices subsidize the economy and higher prices tax it."

Oil prices have been on the rise in recent months, hovering at around $26 a barrel, and analysts warn the nascent economic recovery in the world's largest economy might be in danger of being derailed, should they go back up to over $30.

The impact of rising energy costs was last felt in 2000, when crude shot as high as $38, sending costs higher for companies ranging from airlines to plastics manufacturers. This was partly to blame for the US economic slowdown, which sent Wall Street deeper into bear market territory.

Pundits are saying the flow of oil from the Middle East could even dry up if the Israeli-Palestinian conflict escalates to an all-out war. Some think Saudi Arabia may not be as willing to cover for shortages when others opt to cut back the supply.

"This could spin out of control if (President George W.) Bush does not get it contained," Gheit said.

Historical parallels are troubling. In the late 1970s, high oil prices coupled with high inflation and faltering economic growth put a damper on stocks.

"The economy was in dire straits," Peter Cardillo, chief strategist at Global Partners Securities, told Reuters. "This is a good example of what could happen if oil prices were to shoot higher and stay there for a while."

Oil spiked to about $40 in 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait and the stock market fell sharply. Wall Street recovered and crude came down after the US-led coalition forced Iraqi troops out of the oil-rich emirate. The United States, though, went into a recession that year and next.

Generally, when oil prices shoot up, oil stocks do well, but the broad market always takes it on the chin.

Rising petroleum prices are a boon for small, independent producers that are dependent on crude prices and are not exposed to the rise in refining costs. *Reuters*

Embattled Andersen faces trial over bankrupt foundation

PHOENIX, Arizona—Embattled accounting firm Andersen, fighting for survival after a federal obstruction of justice charge, goes to an Arizona court this week to face investors who claim it failed to flag massive fraud that triggered the largest nonprofit bankruptcy in US history.

Jury selection is set to begin on Monday in the case brought by the trust for the Baptist Foundation of Arizona, which alleges Andersen failed to do its job as auditor of the organization, which filed for bankruptcy in 1999, causing 11,000 mostly elderly investors to lose $570 million.

Chicago-based Andersen was indicted for criminal obstruction of justice after a federal investigation into the destruction of records from audits of Enron, the Houston-based energy trader.

Lawsuits from investors and ex-employees who lost billions of dollars from Enron's collapse have also been filed.

The Phoenix case, which preceded the Enron debacle, was supposed to have been dismissed after Andersen agreed to pay $217 million to settle the class action lawsuit by former investors in the foundation as well as a civil suit by state regulators and proceedings by the Arizona Board of Accountancy.

But the March 1 settlement deal fell apart just four weeks later when Andersen's insurance company refused to pay.

Twelve jurors and alternates will be picked for the trial before Judge Edward Burke in Maricopa County Superior Court in downtown Phoenix. Opening arguments are expected to begin as early as Tuesday.

Attorneys for the trust allege that Andersen auditors were negligent for failing to disclose improprieties by the foundation, which they say operated like a giant Ponzi scheme.

The trust seeks $150 million in compensatory damages, plus an undetermined amount of punitive damages related to Andersen's auditing work for the Baptist Foundation, which was founded in 1948 to raise money for Southern Baptist causes.

"Our case is about how Andersen failed to fulfill its professional obligations . . . even as a chain of whistle-blowers began to tap them on the shoulder and say look at the problems here," said Sean Coffey, the trust's lead attorney.

Coffey told Reuters that he planned to present testimony about a compensation plan used by Andersen that provided "a disincentive to admit mistakes in past audits." *Reuters*

Big Japanese banks trim overseas assets

TOKYO—Japanese banks have drastically reduced overseas assets since the early 1990s amid higher fund-raising costs due to their declining creditworthiness, a major Japanese newspaper reported Monday.

The banks held a combined 60.2 trillion yen ($466.66 billion) in assets at their overseas branches as of the end of February, the Nihon Keizai financial newspaper said, quoting a survey by Japan's central bank. The report did not say how many banks were queried by the Bank of Japan.

The amount was down 63 percent from 1991, or soon after the burst of Japan's stock and property inflated "bubble" economy, the report said.

Officials at the BOJ were not available for comment on the report Monday because of a national holiday.

During the bubble economy of the late 1980s, Japanese lenders, by taking advantage of their high creditworthiness, pocketed profits overseas by lending money at higher interest than they could get in Japan.

But the credit standings of Japanese banks have dropped due to the huge amount of bad debt they hold, causing their profitability to fall as a result of a rise in fund-raising costs.

Bad debt ballooned as the value of collateral, such as land, has plummeted in the aftermath of the bursting of the bubble.

The government has said that dubious loans at all the nation's banks total 36 trillion yen ($281 billion), but private analysts have warned the problem might be bigger.

Of the total overseas assets held by Japanese banks at the end of February, lending to companies totaled 27.7 trillion yen ($214.72 billion), down 60 percent from 1991, while cash deposits overseas stood at 10 trillion yen ($77.52 billion), down 80 percent from 1991, the report said.

The Nihon Keizai said overseas securities holdings totaled 5.4 trillion yen ($41.86 billion), down 30 percent from 1991. *AP*

Thai economy picks up despite drag on exports

BANGKOK—Thailand's economic recovery picked up pace during the first quarter of 2002 on improved consumer confidence, but growth could be derailed by flagging exports, analysts said on Monday.

They said signs of increased domestic spending were likely to prompt the Bank of Thailand (BOT) to raise its 2002 economic growth projection this week from its current 2-3 percent.

"Exports have been a drag on the recovery, and if they fail to show an improvement from the second quarter on it would be a risk factor for the economy," said Thanomsri Fongarun-Rung, an analyst at Merrill Lynch Securities.

The BOT is due to release March monthly data and revise its projections of key economic indicators for 2002 on Tuesday.

Thanomsri said the BOT was expected to raise its 2002 gross domestic product growth projection to 2.5-3.5 percent, helped by encouraging rises in housing and car sales in the first quarter.

Analysts said consumer spending was seen gathering speed over the course of the year, after the central bank this month relaxed rules for retail bank clients to apply for credit cards.

The finance ministry, which has consistently made more optimistic forecasts than other government agencies, last week raised its 2002 GDP growth forecast to 3.6 percent from 3.4 percent. The economy expanded 1.8 percent in 2001.

"The BOT will likely raise its 2002 GDP projection, but not significantly, because exports are still not that robust," Thanomsri said.

Exports, accounting for about 55 percent of GDP, are estimated to have contracted 5 to 7 percent year-on-year in the first quarter, after a 6.9-percent decline in 2001.

The commerce ministry said last week that March exports fell about 5.7 percent from a year earlier, their 10th consecutive month of year-on-year contraction.

Analysts said it would be a struggle for Thailand to achieve the commerce ministry's target of 5.6-percent export growth for the whole year.

Analyst Ping Yee Low at United Overseas Bank in Singapore predicted the BOT would raise its GDP forecast to 2-3.5 percent.

"They would say they are happy with the growth so far . . . I don't think they would come up with too optimistic a forecast. Although figures like industrial production and exports have shown some recovery or have bottomed out, the recovery has not been very strong," she said.

Nuchjarin Kasemsukworarat at SCB Securities estimated the economy grew 2.1 percent in the first quarter, the same pace posted for the previous three months, but slower than the 2.9-percent expansion seen by the finance ministry for January-March. *Reuters*

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At the Ayala Group, one of our core values is commitment to national development. Recognizing the many structural weaknesses of Philippine society, we try to be a positive catalyst for social transformation where it counts the most -- the Filipino youth.

To this end, we support a variety of programs – in this case, the 7th Globe Telecom Academic Achievement Awards – aimed at providing promising young individuals with the values, skills and confidence to make a difference for themselves, their families and their communities.

Congratulations to all the 7th GTAAA winners and we hope that their achievements inspire other Filipino students to attain their full potential.

Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II
Chairman
Globe Telecom

Globe Telecom is ever mindful of its responsibility not only to provide telecommunications services to the Filipino people but also to contribute to improving the lives of our countrymen.

It is for this reason that Globe supports programs that focus on social responsibility and nation-building.

Our GTAAA is one such program. Our search for outstanding young students is one of our company's contributions to help the youth realize their potential and to encourage their drive to achieve.

Today, as our current College and High School winners join the growing list of GTAAA achievers, we at Globe believe in the promise they bring.

Gerardo C. Ablaza, Jr.
President & CEO
Globe Telecom

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Joel, a young ma
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food. Multi-lingual Joe

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young leader worth k

GTAAA OVERALL AWARDEE

JOEL L. PANUGA
De La Salle Univer
National Capital R
ECE

COLLEGE LEVEL

Vanessa J. Alpeche
Silliman University
Dumaguete City
EE

Rudini D. Baynosa
University of St. La Salle - Bacolod
Bacolod City
ECE

Sean Christian S. Calma
Don Bosco Technical College
National Capital Region
ECE

Wallie L. Coronado
Mapua Institute of Technology
National Capital Region
ECE

Arlleth A. Diño
Adamson University
National Capital Region
ECE

Ellen Joy C. Gerona
University of San Carlos-Technological Center
Cebu City
ECE

Cherry M. Lauron
Ateneo de Davao University
Davao City
ECE

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National Capital Region
ECE

Marienne Tonette V. Rosario
University of Santo Tomas
National Capital Region
ECE

Stephen C. Sabanal
Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan
Cagayan de Oro City
ECE

Rexel Liz T. Sagpang
Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology
Iligan City
ECE

Filmann T. Simpao
University of Southeastern Philippines
Davao City
ECE

Jollice L. Tan
Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila
National Capital Region
ECE

Cledion Paul P. Taporco
Mindanao Polytechnic State College
Cagayan de Oro City
ECE

Janice G. Turalba
Saint Louis University
Baguio City
ECE

TOMEN NOKIA ERICSSON

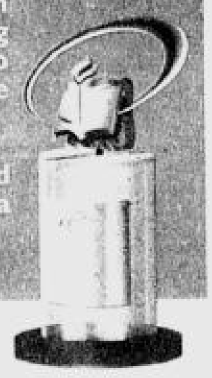
DEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

n of extremely varied interests, is one person who manages to sets his mind to. As a consistent honor student who never fails nd his parents proud, this 7th GTAAA Overall Awardee is a hest honors when he graduates this June from De La Salle ree in Electronics and Communications Engineering. Together evement, he is also an awardee of the BPI Science Awards.

nt, Joel admits that he is a classic case for the "middle-child tention to details is, he admits, his strongest trait which often s the leader in group activities. And being one who clearly lership abilities, Joel also has the compassion and the heart to ers.

he is also an expert when it comes to "juggling his time" – e to spread himself in a lot of extra-curricular activities. When ssion lies in tinkering with gadgets. He looks forward to visiting ut items of interest such as historical burial urns. Joel also great cakes and cooks for himself, his specialty being Chinese is also fluent in both Mandarin and Fookien.

resting blend of academic excellence and well-rounded ial skills is what makes this year's GTAAA Overall Awardee a eping an eye on in the coming years.



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Iligan City East High School
Lanao del Norte

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Ramon Teves Pastor Memorial
Dumaguete Science High School
Dumaguete City

Christine Joy U. Querebillo
Our Lady of Perpetual
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Marikina City

Ira Dominique T. Alatraca
Cebu City National Science
High School
Cebu City

Diana Jean C. de Leon
Montessori de San Juan
San Juan

Jackson S. Romorosa
Our Lady of Peace High School
Lanao del Sur

Leorence A. Amarille
Palawan National School
Palawan

Namphril G. Malaluan
Notre Dame of Kidapawan College
North Cotabato

Andrea Antonia L. Silva
Assumption College
Makati City

Dee A. Arceño
Colegio de las Hijas de Jesus
Iloilo City

Maricris C. Ng
Notre Dame of Tacurong
for Girls
Sultan Kudarat

Jovert Irvin C. Vertulfo
Holy Name University
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Cavite National Science
High School
Cavite

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La Salle Green Hills
Mandaluyong City

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Sacred Heart School
Tacloban City

Justine M. Go
Albert Einstein School
Maguindanao

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Naujan Academy
Oriental Mindoro

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La Immaculada Concepcion School
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Nurturing a Global Mindset In Young Filipino Leaders

The world is at an age where technological advances are rapidly gaining ground. The last few decades have seen no lull in technology's rapid development, most prominently in the fields of computers and telecommunications. The Internet, mobile telephony and fiber optics, once unimaginable, are now very much part of our daily lives.

Inevitably, the coming of information and communications technology has affected and changed much of how we live. It has bridged physical divides to knit society into a global community, and has challenged and redefined old paradigms.

In order for our society to successfully ride the waves of change, young leaders with global mindsets must come to the fore. With their perspective comes the ability to harness change, as well as the readiness to create solutions for emerging new realities. Globally competitive, these young leaders are also aware that excellence is the only acceptable standard.

Today, Globe Telecom marks its 7th Globe Telecom Academic Achievement Awards with a commitment to foster a global mindset among the Filipino youth. By opening their minds to think beyond borders, we are honing young Filipino leaders to hurdle the challenges of a rapidly evolving, technology-driven world. Globally prepared and infused with Filipino idealism, these young Filipino leaders will proudly lead the country in the 21st century and beyond.

What is GTAAA?

The Globe Telecom Academic Achievement Awards, or the GTAAA, is an annual industry-academe linkage program that recognizes and promotes student excellence. Now on its 7th year, the GTAAA has established itself as the core social responsibility program of Globe Telecom in its effort to contribute to nation-building and to promote public interest in telecommunications and information technology.

Who can join?

The GTAAA is open to all regular graduating students of Electronics and Communications Engineering (ECE) and Electrical Engineering (EE) from selected universities and colleges nationwide; and to all regular graduating high school students who excel in Science and Math in selected areas nationwide.

NCR: Makati, Mandaluyong, San Juan, Pasig, Marikina
Southern Luzon: Batangas, Cavite, Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Palawan
Visayas: Bacolod City, Cebu City, Dumaguete City, Iloilo City, Tacloban City*, Tagbilaran City*
Mindanao: Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat

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What does it take to join?

COLLEGE

1. Must be a regular graduating ECE or EE student
2. In the top 5% of the graduating batch,
3. Has no failing grade in any academic or non-academic subject
4. Of good moral standing
5. Endorsed by the school

HIGH SCHOOL

1. Must be a regular graduating student with final grade average of at least 85% from 1st to 3rd years
2. Has no grade lower than 88% in all Science and Math subjects from 1st to 3rd years
3. Has no failing grade in any academic or non-academic subject
4. Of good moral standing
5. Endorsed by the school

Winning the GTAAA

COLLEGE

1. The GTAAA Overall Awardee will receive P75,000 and a Trophy of Excellence.
2. Each of the College Awardees will receive P30,000 and a Trophy of Recognition.
3. Each of the Awardees' schools will receive a Trophy of Recognition.

HIGH SCHOOL

1. Each of the Area Awardees will receive P20,000 and a Trophy of Recognition.
2. Each of the Awardees' schools will receive a Trophy of Recognition.

- *All College and High School Awardees may also receive other special prizes.*

Selection Process

COLLEGE

Phase 1: Pre-Qualification

1. All participating schools will select one official candidate who meets the pre-qualification requirements of the program.
2. The official candidate must submit the entry form to the Public Relations Division of Globe Telecom on or before November 30, 2001.

Phase 2: Selection

1. Globe Telecom will validate the entry forms and determine the qualified applicants.
2. The official candidate of each college or university will go through a panel interview and a written examination on January 2002.

Phase 3: Final Evaluation

1. All Awardees must submit their final grades to Globe Telecom within a week after the final examination of SY 2001-2002.
2. Globe Telecom will validate the results of the selection phase and the final average (1st to 5th years) to determine the GTAAA Overall Awardee.
3. The GTAAA Overall Awardee is the one who gets the highest rank using the criteria set by Globe Telecom.

HIGH SCHOOL

Phase 1: Pre-Qualification

1. All interested students who meet the pre-qualification requirements must submit their entry forms to the Public Relations Division of Globe Telecom on or before November 30, 2001.
2. Globe Telecom will validate the entry forms and determine the qualified applicants.

Phase 2: Selection

1. Qualified students and their schools will be notified by Globe Telecom.
2. All qualified students will take a written exam prepared and conducted by an independent testing institution on February 2002.

Phase 3: Final Evaluation

1. All qualified students must submit their 4th year final grades to Globe Telecom within a week after the final examinations of SY 2001-2002.
2. Globe Telecom will validate the results of the selection phase and the final average (1st to 4th years) to determine the Area Awardees.

Criteria

COLLEGE

Panel Interview	40 %
Written Exam	35 %
Final Grade Ave. (1st to 5th years)	25 %
	100%

HIGH SCHOOL

Written Exam	60 %
Final Grade Ave. (1st to 4th years)	40 %
	100%

GTAAA Alumni Club

All GTAAA Awardees automatically become members of the GTAAA Alumni Club which entitles them to various privileges.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

Leading Pawnshop, Aurora Blvd., Cubao, Quezon City. Auction April 30, 2002 9am. All pawned item from June - November 2001.

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ANTONIO L. JAVELLANA was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per deed of Extrajudicial settlement (Doc. No. 325, Page No. 63, Book No. II, Series of 2001 of the notarial register of Notary Public Agustin Q. Javellana of Quezon City, Metro Manila) and Supplemental Extrajudicial Settlement (Doc. No. 348, Page No. 68, Book No. II, Series of 2002 of the notarial register of Notary Public Agustin Q. Javellana of Quezon City, Metro Manila).
(PDI-April 30,May 7&14,2002)

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- Must have at least one year experience in production work in a publication
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Interested individuals are encouraged to e-mail their application letter and resumés to blindad02@lycos.com

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. Project: **Sp99.N4P4.Vc-0282, Construction, Erection and Installation of 138 & 69 kV Substation Equipment for Schedule I - Cadiz S/S in Negros, Occidental.**
2. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall consist of furnishing all construction plant, labor, materials, supplies, tools and equipment excluding materials and equipment specified to be furnished by TRANSCO and the construction/erection and installation of 50MVA Substation.

   Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid:

   Schedule 1 - Cadiz S/S - P53,275,954.00
3. Application for Eligibility is open to Filipino contractors with the following valid License and Registration Particulars issued by PCAB.

   License Particular:

   Schedule I - Cadiz S/S "Category AAA - Specialty: Electrical Works"

   Registration Particular:

   Schedule I - Cadiz S/S "Large B - Specialty: Electrical Works"
4. Application for Eligibility (legal, technical and financial documents and statements) shall be evaluated using "PASS/ FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be invited by TRANSCO in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the contractor's offer to the contract under bidding; and shall be subject to Postqualification before an award is made. Bid prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.
5. Application for Eligibility and Eligibility Forms will be available for issuance starting April 25, 2002 at the Bids and Contracts Management Department, Second Floor, Building No. 2, NPC-OBC, National Transmission Corporation, Agham Road corner Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City 1104, Telefax No.: 921-2308 upon presentation of Letter of Intent, original PCAB License and a payment of non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 per copy.
6. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility Forms, documents and statements shall be on **May 27, 2002** and shall be submitted at the registration office and address mentioned above. If the date is a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
7. TRANSCO reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality there in, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
8. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **R. T. BACANI**
Chairman
Contracts Award Committee

(PDI - April 30, May 4 & 8, 2002)

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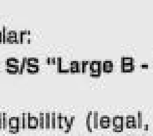

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PHILIPPINE CARABAO CENTER

Department of Agriculture

April 23, 2002

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

The Philippine Carabao Center (PCC), an attached agency of the Department of Agriculture is inviting interested Filipino Contractors or firms with valid licenses issued by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) and classified as Category A or higher, to apply for prequalification and submit bids for the construction of its new Regional Centers in Mariano Marcos State University at Batac, Ilocos Norte, Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University at Rosario, La Union and West Visayas State University at La Paz, Iloilo City. Preference will be given to local Contractors.

Both License and Certificate must be unexpired before the prequalification, evaluation, after opening of bids and during the entire duration of the project.

The sequence of dates for carrying out this prequalification and bid shall be as follows:

1. Issuance of Pre-C Forms, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P500.00, May 6 to 10, 2002 at the Office of the Executive Director. Incomplete applications shall not be accepted.
2. Deadline for the submission of duly accomplished prequalification statements is on May 7, 2002.
3. Notice of prequalified and predisqualified contractors will be issued not later than June 14, 2002. Only prequalified contractors shall be invited to submit proposals.
4. Issuance of Bid-Tender forms, Plans Specifications and Requirements Forms, June 17 to 21, 2002 at the Office of the Executive Director, upon payment of P1,500.00 which amount is non-refundable.
5. Pre-Bidding conference is scheduled at 10:00 A.M. on August 5, 2002 at the Office of the Executive Director, 5th Floor, DCIEC Building, NIA Compound, EDSA, Quezon City.
6. Submission of duly accomplished bid-tender and supplemental documents shall not be later than 10:00 A.M. on August 20, 2002, at the Office of the Executive Director, 5th Floor, DCIEC Building, NIA Compound, EDSA, Quezon City after which the opening of bids will be done immediately.

All particulars relative to the prequalification, bid bond, pre-bid conference, evaluation and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of P.D. 1594 and its implementing rules and regulations as amended.

The Philippine Carabao Center reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or waive any defect or required formality therein and to award the project to the proponent whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) LIBERTADO C. CRUZ
Chairman
Prequalification, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI--April 28, 29 & 30, 2002)

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OBITUARIES

Dr. Artemio M. Cabrera

of Taal, Batangas

Former Director of the Jose R. Reyes Memorial Hospital

Passed away peacefully in the Grace of his Creator on April 28, 2002 at the age of 89 at the Makati Medical Center.

He is survived by his loving wife **Rosario Zagala Cabrera**; loving children and their spouses **Percival** and **Bella Galang**, **Maribel**, **Carina** and **Nonoy Vasquez**, **Dr. Estela Z. Cabrera**, **Lala** and **Philip Neri**, **Adela** and **Bambi Salvador**, **Bobbit** and **Deena Cruz**; all his loving grandchildren, brothers **Arsenio** and **Alfredo**; sisters and brothers-in-law **Aurora Coronel**, **Paula Martinez**, **Luz Lising**, **Cynthia Pascual-Zagala**, **Eulogio M. Tupaz**, **Juanita G. Zagala**, **Leonardo G. Zagala**, **Violeta Goco Zagala**, **Anacleta G. Zagala** and **Lourdes Z. Jacaria**.

His remains lie in state at the Don Bosco Memorial Chapels, Makati City.

Interment will be on Thursday, May 2, 2002 at 3:00 p.m. at the Taal Catholic Cemetery, after the Eucharistic Celebration at the Basilica de San Martin, Taal, Batangas.

In Loving Memory
on the
Second Death Anniversary
of

TERESITA CONTRERAS SANTOS

September 20, 1931 - April 30, 2002

Holy Masses will be offered today, April 30, 2002 at the following churches:

Family Mausoleum, *Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque*	4:00 PM
Santuario de San Antonio, *Forbes Park, Makati City*	7:30 AM
Immaculate Conception Parish, *Lantana Street, Cubao, Quezon City*	7:00 AM
St. Joseph Parish, *Project 3, Quezon City*	7:00 AM
Our Lady of the Abandoned, *Sta. Ana, Manila*	6:30 AM
Don Bosco Parish Church, *Pasay Road, Makati City*	7:00 AM
San Sebastian Cathedral, *Lipa City, Batangas*	6:00 AM
Santuario de San Jose, *Greenhills, Mandaluyong*	7:30 AM

We, her family, request relatives, friends and pious readers to join us in prayer for the eternal repose of her soul.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

Prof. Candido L. Saquin

who joined our Creator on April 25, 2002

convey our sincerest thanks to all those who condoled with us, offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy, went to the wake and kept vigil, attended the funeral rites and in many unknown countless ways in the hour of our bereavement.

DOLORES CHU LIM

of Binondo, Manila

Died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord and joined her beloved husband "LIM HIO (PIAO HIO)" on April 26, 2002 at the age of 88.

She is survived by her children **DRA. ERLINDA & DR. PATRICK LEH, LEONARDO & SALLY LIM, LIBERTY & CASTILLO ONG, WILLIAM & SALLY LIM, DR. RODOLFO & DRA. JOSEPHINE LIM**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, May 4, 2002 at 9:00 a.m. at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque.

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die."

John 11:25-26

Rodolfo "Rudy" Fantone

Former Chief Postal Inspector
Bureau of Post Manila

Peacefully went home to be with the Lord on April 25, 2002 at the age of 67.

His loving wife **Dra. Profeta Fantone**; his sons **Randolf**, **Raymund** and **Richard**; grandchildren **Ron-Ron, Ryan, Rod-Rod, Leanara, Rialina**; relatives and friends request everyone to rejoice with us at his return to our Creator.

His remains lie in state at Dulce Funeral Parlor, Abad Santos, Tondo, Manila (711-3064; 711-1550).

Interment will be on May 2, 2002, 10:00 a.m. at the Manila North Cemetery.

ELENA GONZALES FERNANDO

Died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord on April 27, 2002 at the age of 55.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel LOVE, Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on May 2, 2002 at the Makati South Cemetery after the 1:30 p.m. Mass at the Most Holy Redeemer Parish Church, Brixton Hills, Quezon City.

JUAN U. TRIA, JR.

Died on April 29, 2002 at the age of 49.

His bereaved wife **CHELOY**; daughter **MIKO**; brother and sisters **MARY, PEPE, VICKY, FRANCES & ROSE**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington East the Garden Chapels, Mercedes Avenue, Pasig.

Cremation will be on Friday, May 3, 2002 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Crematorium at 10:00 a.m.

Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it so much as dawned on man what God has prepared for those who love Him.

I Corinthians 2:9

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CAPITOL MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
1305 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Tel. 732-0309; 732-1096
CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad, Mandaue City, Cebu; Tels. 346-2643; 346-2601
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City. Tels. 231-0721; 231-3102
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MANILA BAY LOCALE

'City garden' sits on vast expanse of open space

Text and Photos
By Tessa R. Salazar

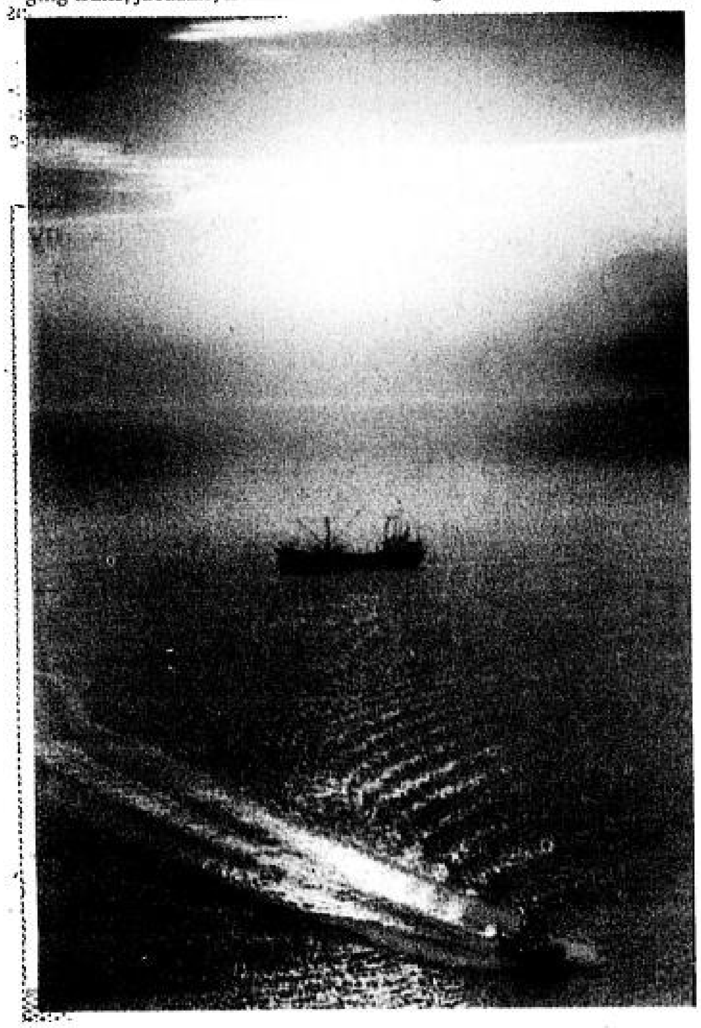
HOW does it feel to live inside a condominium tower neatly planned by interior designers and erected inside a "garden city" that devotes 60 percent of its vast tract of land by the bay to open space?

Would this mean goodbye to the cramped commercial centers and its intolerable traffic jams? Would this mean hello to sunrises and sunsets, a magnificent view of the waterfront, jogging trails, jacuzzis, health clubs and lush landscapes?

Dream city

If you ask developer Federal Land Inc. this dream city is now a resounding reality. The low-profile community developer brags about its 40-hectare garden city that sits near the cultural and trading center of Manila called the Metropolitan Park.

The Bay Gardens' two 18-story residential towers are almost completely occupied. The Boardwalk Tower is completely sold out. The Crystal Bay Tower is 90 percent sold. And another tower is rising called The Anchor Bay.



THE SUNSET will cap the occupants' afternoons every day

The Anchor Bay is now 35 percent sold.

Asked the difference among the three Bay Gardens towers, Federal Land Inc. vice president for marketing Cheryl Ann R. Arnold said that Anchor Bay tower, compared to the two rectangular-shaped towers, is "Y" shaped.

"Whichever side of the tower you're facing, you'll get a view. This would either be a straight view of the Manila Bay, a view of the Manila Bay skyline going toward Luneta, on the other side is a view of the Parañaque area up toward the airport, which is a very nice view from above."

The Bay Gardens offer one-, two- or three-bedroom units and penthouse units. There would be heated indoor lap pools aside from the existing outdoor resort style pool.

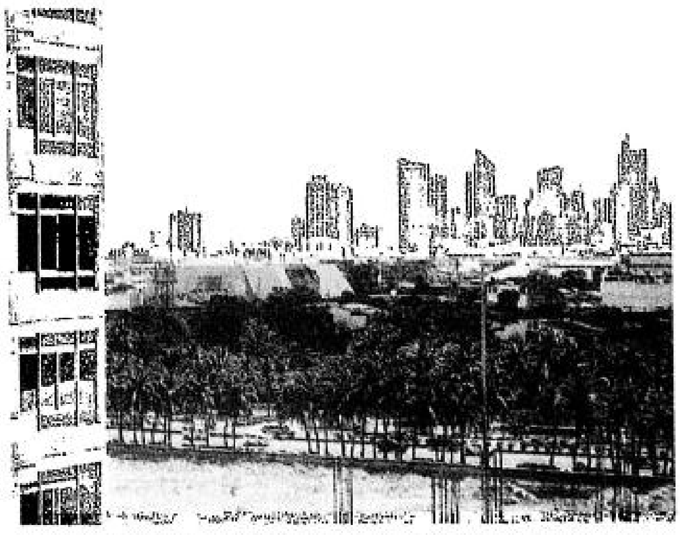
The two-story penthouse unit, all of 215 sq. m, boasts of a high-ceiling living room and receiving area strategically facing the Manila Bay area. This room is on the topmost level, on the 17th and 18th floors. A study that doubles as a guest room with bath completes the three-bedroom, three-bathroom setup on the second floor. Two parking slots are allocated for this type of unit.

The executive deluxe suite is a 168-sq.-m suite limited only to the 14th to 16th floors. It has three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a dining area for formal functions, a sitting area or reception corner near the entrance and two parking slots.

The family suite is a three-bedroom unit that comes in two sizes—117 and 122 sq. m. It has a study-cum-bedroom for the two boys, a second room for a little sister and a big master bedroom with a luxurious bathroom, bathtub and a private shower booth.

For families just starting, there is the 96-sq.-m unit that comes in two-bedroom units completely finished with chic homogenous tiles covering the living room that leads to a wide-angled balcony.

AMID the fountains and open space, kids of Bay Gardens' occupants frolic at a wide pool situated at the heart of the podium level of the three Bay Gardens towers.



A VIEW of Makati's CBD from Crystal Bay Tower's 10th floor unit

The master bathroom is equipped with Mark III series one-piece water closet, HGC accessories and Italian made, single lever faucets and telephone showers.

For the young urban professional, there is the 52-sq.-m pad with a one-bedroom unit. It has a modern kitchen, wardrobe systems, bathroom fixtures, tiled flooring and a parking slot.

The Bay Garden towers have only 7 units per floor serviced by three Mitsubishi elevators.

Interior designs for the Bay Garden towers are varied, said Arnold. These include the modern minimalist style of Marion Coscolluela, the dramatic East meets West by Ivy Almario and Associates, the fusion of oriental and contemporary designs by Recio+Casas Architects, the Mediterranean designs of Cholet Antonio, and the ultramodern contemporary styles of Proyekto Designs.

Nature City by the bay

Meanwhile, the 40-hectare Metropolitan Park—where the Bay Garden Towers sit—is currently on a replanting stage on all locations to enhance the lush landscape, jogging trails and picnic fields. Soon to rise in the Metropolitan Park are the new Manila Doctors Hospital and a Petron mega gasoline station. Toyota showroom Toyota Manila Bay, the Le Pavilion, known as the newest event tent with over 1800 sq. m of space for exhibits, parties and sports activities, and the Metro Garden for outdoor activities are also found here.

The three residential towers are less than 10 km away from the business centers of Makati, Manila and Parañaque. They are also at the doorstep of the two expressways that lead to other developing areas in the near south, the South Luzon Tollway and the Coastal Highway leading to Calabarzon.

It sounds too good to be true for someone who hasn't seen the bay's new setup. Hardly anyone notices that the 25-year-old vast tract of reclaimed area along Roxas Boulevard is now transformed with strategically erected buildings, a long boardwalk, and new four-lane highways running parallel to Roxas Boulevard, with access routes from the CCP complex to the Coastal Mall.

Not far away from the Metropolitan Park is the Church of the Shrine of Jesus inside the SM property area. The SM Group of Companies is set to develop the "Mall of Asia" that will comprise 500,000 sq. m of commercial space.

Federal Land Inc. is the real estate arm of the Metrobank Group of Companies involved in the marketing of many high-rise condominiums and offices in Makati, Mandaluyong and Downtown Manila.

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Forbeswood Heights launched in Bonifacio Global City

PREMIER urban property developer Megaworld Corp. and Bonifacio West Development Corp., a consortium led by the Rufino-Dupasquier group, recently launched the first of a series of residential condominium projects in Bonifacio Global City called Forbeswood Heights Luxury Garden Residences at the Megaworld Showroom at The World Centre in Makati City.

Forbeswood Heights, consisting of six multistory towers, is part of the P15-billion Forbes Town Center, a mixed-use, five-hectare development located in the West Crescent Park district at the former military facility.

Setting new standards

The first major property development of its kind at the Bonifacio Global City in the last two years, Forbeswood Heights is poised to set new standards in cosmopolitan living as it brings together elegant residential choices available under flexible payment schemes and a host of lifestyle amenities and facilities in arguably the country's finest location close to the Manila Golf and Country Club, Forbes Park and Manila Polo Club.

"Forbeswood Heights presents a unique opportunity to own a condominium unit at a fraction of the cost of an existing house and lot in a prime area that hosts the country's most exclusive gated villages," said Megaworld vice president for sales and marketing Rosemarie Cambaliza.

Meticulously planned

Megaworld's newest urban enclave is meticulously planned to offer its target prospects a new standard of privacy and comfort without a high-end price. Featuring executive studios and one-bedroom residences, which come in floor areas of 59 or 48 square meters, Forbeswood Heights offers homes designed to address the varying needs of young urban professionals, executives, bachelors, small families and even students.

A typical unit features built-in finishes and fittings including polished ceramic tiles for the living and dining areas, wood parquet floor for the bedroom or sleeping den, modular undercounter and hanging cabinets for the kitchen, mechanical ventilation for both kitchen and toilet and modular closets for all bedrooms.

Each of the six towers boasts superior building facilities such as an entrance lobby, a security command center for 24-hour monitoring, centralized mail room, two high-speed interior-finished elevators, automatic fire sprinkler system, standby power generator for common areas and an overhead water tank and underground cistern. Car wash facilities are in place at strategic areas of the two to three floors of basement parking.

TRIBUTE TO HOMEOWNERS

Moldex celebrates 6th year

MOLDEX Realty Marketing Inc., the exclusive marketing company of Moldex Realty Inc. and Moldex Land Inc, recently celebrated its sixth year anniversary with a month-long program of activities that pays tribute to homeowners.

In a span of six years, the MRMI has marketed thousands of housing units and residential lots in carefully selected sites for homebuyers and investors. Among its projects are the Metrogate series of middle-end and high-end subdivisions north and south of Metro Manila. These are Metrogate Silang Estates, Metrogate Trece Martires, Metrogate Indang, Metrogate Dasmariñas Estates, Metrogate San Jose, Metrogate Meycauayan, Metrogate Angeles, Metrogate Villas, Metrogate Complex, Metrogate Tagaytay Estates, Metroview Ridge Estates, Heritage Homes Trece Martires, Heritage Homes Meycauayan, Villa Caceres Sta. Rosa and 1322 Roxas BouLevard, a luxury residential condominium.

Moldex's open houses are opportunities for buyers to avail themselves of special incentive packages and discounts. "Our buyers enjoy incentives and bonus packages like the Moldex Buyer's Plus whereby buyers can accumulate the so-called Rewards Plus points and exchange them for special gifts," says MRMI president Editha L. Manansala.

Another special buyer's incentive is Moldex Perfect Home Service Package. At no extra fee, the MRMI helps its clients find suitable service institutions or companies that can meet their financing and homebuilding needs such as interior design, landscaping' and furnishing.

Highlighting the MRMI anniversary activities are open houses where prospective homeowners can view their future homes and can get special discounts and flexible payment terms. Foundation Day and Grand Investors' festivities with booths and mini fairs were held Friday. Today is Recognition Day for April's top sales producers.

REAL ESTATE

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Retail sector projects healthy signals in 2002

By Charles E. Buban

IF there's one area of the property sector that does move and perform above the average, it's the retail sector. According to the Colliers Jardine Philippines report, the sector continues to outperform the others as various retail developments in the city are getting completed, further proving its resilience amid a steady-moving economy.

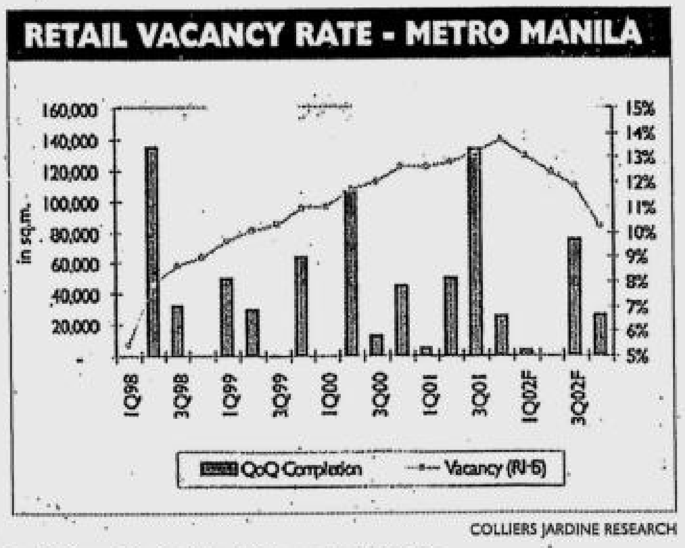
The retail sector generally includes the clothing retailers; department, discount, and variety stores; supermarkets and convenience stores; consumer electronics and home furnishings retailers; building materials and auto parts retailers and wholesalers; and catalogue and mail order companies.

Leasable retail space up

The completion of seven projects in Metro Manila area last year jacked up the stock of leasable retail space by 6.8 percent or a total of 3.36 million sq. m. The seven projects have a combined supply of 213,825 sq. m.

Last year's fourth quarter saw the completion of two notable projects—Ayala Land's Metropoint (8,000 sq. m) in Pasay City and SM-Keppel Land's The Podium (17,316 sq. m) in Ortigas, Pasig City which opened last December.

RETAIL VACANCY RATE - METRO MANILA



COLLIERS JARDINE RESEARCH

The Podium spans a total land area of nearly 28,000 sq. m of which 17,136 sq. m have been earmarked for lease. It is targeted toward a predominantly AB market comprising residents and office workers in the Ortigas district, including the adjacent Asian Development Bank.

A joint venture of SM Group and Keppel Philippines Properties, The Podium is a five-level shopping mall located on ADB avenue in Ortigas Center master-planned to interlink the various components of a future mixed-use complex called SM-KL Towers. The said complex is envisioned to have two office towers and a residential tower.

> Property retail sector performs above the average

Expected to further expand

Consequently, Metro Manila-wide retail vacancy by the end of last year inched up to 13.7 percent from the previous quarter's 13.2 percent. Based on this figure, Colliers International research manager expects vacancy rate to remain at double digits for the year 2002. "Although this will be concentrated on small and independent retail centers," he added.

Occupancy for established retail centers should be maintained at more than 95 percent.

Throughout this year, the stock of leasable retail space is projected to expand further by 3.1 percent or 3.47 million sq. m with the additional supply from the following projects:

- Ayala Land's Greenbelt redevelopment phase I-A with 3,000 sq. m of leasable space expected to be completed by first quarter of this year
- SM Bicutan with 75,000 sq. m. expected to be completed by third quarter of this year
- Ayala Land's Greenbelt redevelopment phase I-B with 26,000 sq. m of leasable space expected to be completed by fourth quarter of this year

Another notable retail project announcement during this quarter is the Big R Tutuban. Robinsons Land Corp. will partner with Tutuban Properties Inc. to set up its warehouse-type shopping center in Tutuban Center in Divisoria, Manila. The two parties have already agreed to pursue the development of the Big R Superstore in the remaining 1.5-hectare land in Divisoria where the Tutuban mall is currently located.

At present, the Robinsons Land Corp.'s presence in Tutuban Center is through its Robinsons Department Store and Supermarket.

Colliers International is the leading property knowledge services company in the Philippines. As the country's premier property services firm, it has been involved in many of the Philippines major real estate initiatives.

THE SUN Village Beachfront Resort

Another resort opens in Boracay

THE SUN Village Beachfront Resort in Boracay is now open to travelers who want to experience the excitement and beauty of this paradise island.

Located at the more private and peaceful southern end of the famed White Beach, The Sun Village Beachfront Resort houses 24 air-conditioned rooms. With a private toilet and bath with hot and cold shower, each room provides total comfort for travelers.

Boracay visitors can also feast on the most succulent dishes in the resort's spacious restaurant. A spectacular, breezy verandah café bar is laid in front of the resort by the beach, where guests can relax under the sun while enjoying their cocktails.

With the opening of The Sun Village Beachfront Resort, Boracay now has two great Sun Village Boracay Resorts. The Sun Village Hilltop Resort continues to welcome and treat guests with its 12 air-conditioned rooms, lush tropical greens, cool hilltop breeze and Asian decor.

NEW COMMERCIAL BUILDING

The two-story Parian Place, located along The Strip at Laguna BelAir, a township development of popular housing developer Empire East Land Holdings Inc., recently opened its doors to serve the needs of residents of the township and nearby communities.

Georgetown invites brokers, agents

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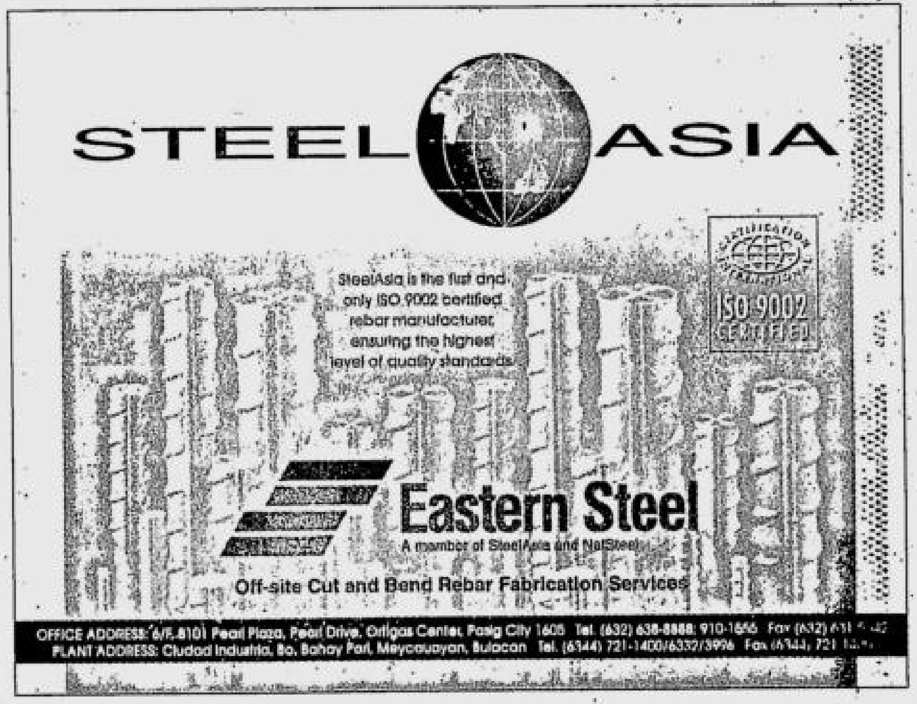

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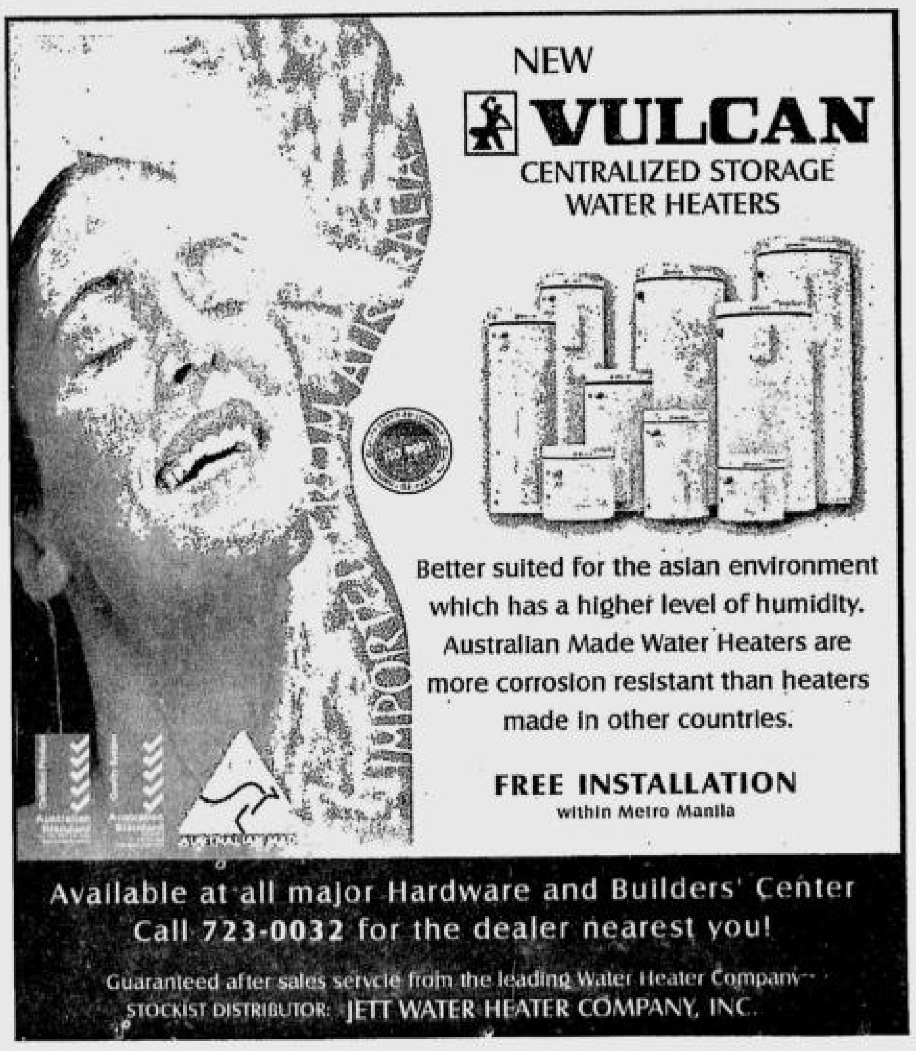

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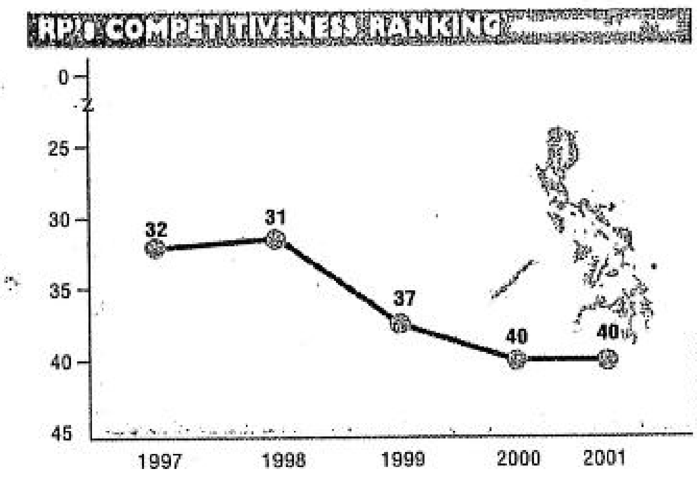
RP still lags in competitiveness race



SOURCE: AIM

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINES remained 40th among the 49 countries ranked in the latest World Competitiveness Survey—made by the Institute for Management Development with Asian Institute of Management-Policy Center as local partner—as chronic infrastructure problems and low productivity offset a rebound in the economy last year.

The Philippines was dead last among the 49 countries in terms of infrastructure and productivity in the World Competitiveness Report, which rates countries based on their economic performance, government efficiency, business efficiency and infrastructure using 286 indicators from national statistics and executive surveys.

AIM executive director Federico Macaranas said the Philippines improved its economic performance ranking—from No. 40 to 33. This, he said, was due to a heady growth in employment (the Philippines ranked No. 1 in this category from 45 last year) and a rebound in foreign investments on the back of renewed investor confidence arising from last year's change in administration.

But the Philippines fared poorly in three other benchmarks for competitiveness—the country maintained its ranking in government efficiency at 37 while it slipped from 41 to 44 in both business efficiency and infrastructure.

Macaranas said the executives surveyed wanted to see greater streamlining reforms among government institutions to address the ballooning budget deficit that they felt would hobble the government for several more years.

The report also showed that infrastructure—including health and environment—and productivity remained the country's most serious flaws, further validating businessmen's complaints about rising costs of doing business in the country.

"Although the economy is improving, there are clear indications that the government must build its infrastructure while the business sector must improve its productivity to improve our overall competitiveness," Macaranas said.

The top five countries in the latest rankings are the United States, Finland, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Singapore while the bottom five are Argentina, Venezuela, Indonesia, Turkey and Poland.

Japan refuses to cooperate in Ogami case

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE JAPANESE government refused to cooperate with the Philippines' Anti-Money Laundering Council in a case involving self-styled cult leader Genta Ogami.

Sources said the Japanese government continued to give the Philippine authorities the run-around, citing the non-affiliation of the Anti-Money Laundering Council to the Egmont Group, a loose group of financial intelligence units in different countries.

The council headed by Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura was planning to transform itself into a stronger financial intelligence unit to gain the recognition of the international community.

The council also counts as its members the heads of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Insurance Commission.

A source noted that the council had been pressing the Japanese government for more information about Ogami who has a pending securities fraud case in the country.

But the Japanese authorities, said the source, had turned down the Philippines' request because it was not a member of the Egmont Group.

"The Japanese government said it could not share information because the Philippines was not a member of the Egmont Group and the AMLC was not yet a full-fledged financial intelligence unit," said the source.

The council has been asking for more information about Ogami since the Unitrust Development Bank, which was bought by Ogami through his dummies in September 2001, declared a bank holiday and was shut down by the BSP early this year.

Banks' deposits in BSP rising

INDICATING a lack of investment opportunities, the banks' deposits in the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas continued to increase despite the low interest rates the central bank was paying.

BSP data showed that as of the week ending April 26, the banks' voluntary deposits in the central bank rose by 16.16 percent, or by P14.824 billion, to P106.547 billion from P91.723 billion in the previous week.

Three weeks ago, the deposits stood at only P83.372 billion.

A bank analyst explained that the higher bank placements with the BSP signaled the lack of investment opportunities available to banks. "That banks are making do with what the central bank and the Bureau of Treasury offer, and this is a bit alarming," said the analyst.

Banks' deposits in the BSP are increasing alongside the continued decline of treasury bill rates. The benchmark 91-day treasury bill yield fell to a new low of 4.299 percent yesterday.

Another analyst noted that there was evidently a lot of excess cash in the system yet banks were not using these funds for lending.

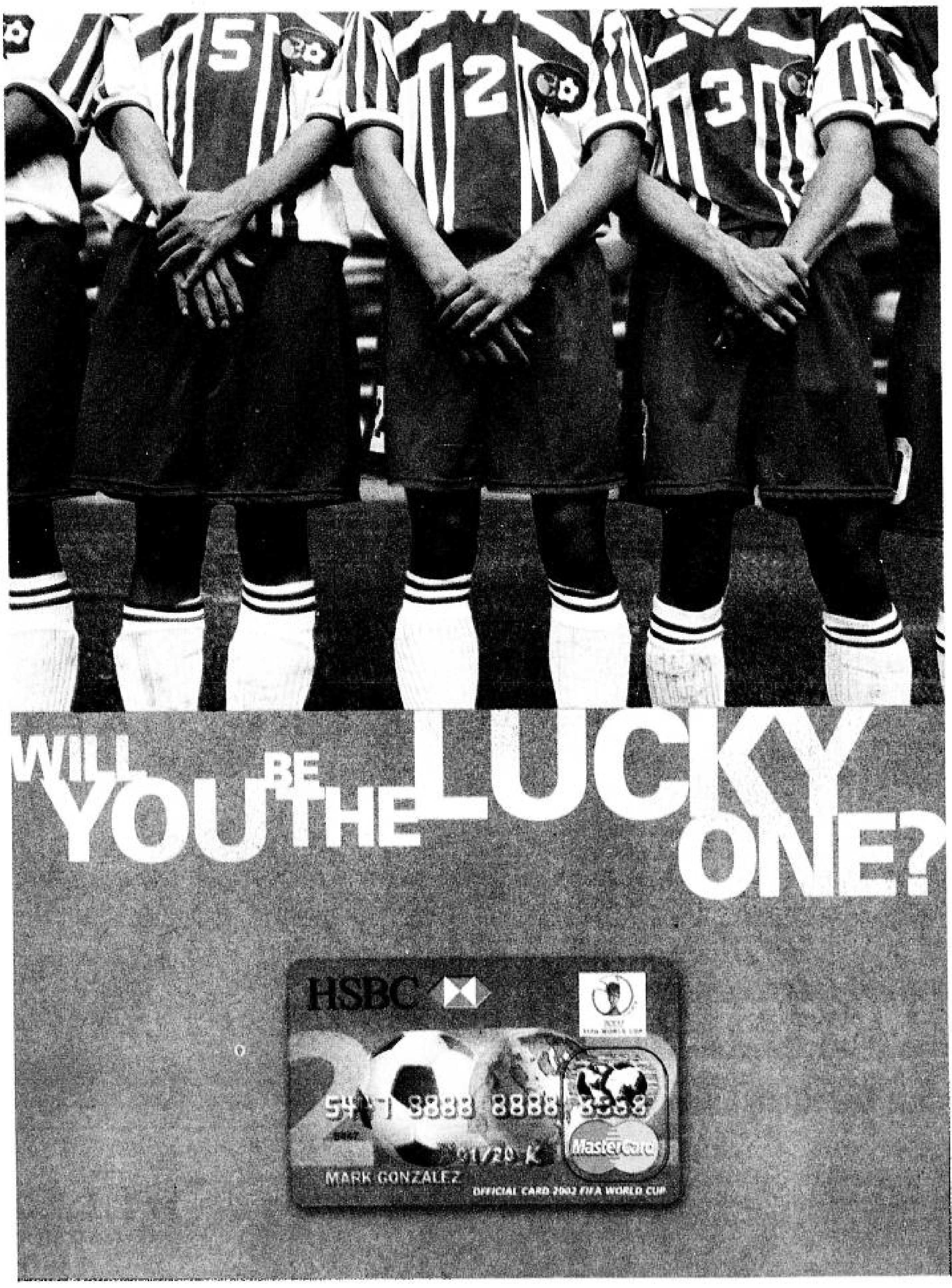
The increasing voluntary deposits to the BSP, as opposed to the mandatory deposits in the form of the 16 percent reserve requirement, came at a time when the central bank had tightened its policies on bank deposits to encourage the lenders to extend credit aggressively.

Under the present system, a P5-billion deposit of a bank in the BSP's overnight facility earns 7 percent; the next P5 billion yields 4 percent, and any amount in excess of P10 billion earns only one percent.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura, in an earlier interview, explained that the BSP wanted to discourage banks from parking their excess cash in the BSP vaults. The BSP wants the banks to use their funds for lending particularly to the private sector.

The central bank tightened its lending rates after realizing that banks had been parking their excess cash in the BSP vault.

A bank source said that banks, to maximize their interest income, place P5 billion in the overnight facility for the money to earn the overnight rate and put its excess funds in a special deposit window or in term reverse repurchase. *Clarissa S. Batino*



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LIFESTYLE Fitness
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Out of the dark and into the light

WHITE PERFECT
Spot Whitening Spot Corrector

By Cathy Babao Guballa

A 3-step skin care program helps women combat skin pigmentation, brown spots and freckles

FRECKLES, age spots, uneven skin tone are the bane of every woman. Although perceptions of what makes a woman beautiful vary from culture to culture in Asia, the trend that binds most women is the desire for fair skin. In the Philippines alone, the skin whitening industry is a multimillion-peso business that continues to grow by leaps and bounds.

L'Oréal Paris is considered as the beauty expert in hair color, skin care and cosmetics. The brand's philosophy is to provide the most innovative and high quality products at an affordable price. In the Philippines, L'Oreal Paris is popular because of the Plenitude line and more recently for its highly effective and affordable White Perfect with Melanin Block.

Studies conducted by the company in Japan and China showed that women in both countries (and in most Asian countries) desire the combination of fair skin tone and smooth skin. This ideal became the target of L'Oreal Skincare Laboratories researchers when they came up with their newest line—White Perfect Triple Whitening Range with Melanin Block, which is L'Oreal Paris' exclusive formula and part of a complete skin care program that acts at each step of the darkening process.

Dr. Keiko Takahashi, a member of the American Academy of Dermatology and special consultant for L'Oreal Skincare Laboratories, is also the director of the Suzuki Clinic in Japan, which conducted L'Oreal studies on the skin darkening of Asian women. Speaking to media members at Parklane Hotel in Hong Kong, Takahashi explained the three major causes of skin darkening and brown spots.

Causes of skin darkening

The first major cause is attributed to the continuous production of melanin, which is responsible for skin pigmentation. "Melanin pigment is the main factor that affects skin color. Its major functions are to provide the skin its color (genetically programmed natural pigmentation) and protect against UV radiation (induced pigmentation)," Takahashi explains. She adds that when skin is exposed to UV radiation, an immediate pigmentation occurs due to oxidation of melanin pigment found on the upper layer of the epidermis that results in sun tan. However, she says, "A delayed pigmentation occurs a few days after exposure and continues for several months. During this stage, superfluous melanin formation and localized accumulation takes place resulting in sun spots and freckles."

Secondly, Takahashi adds, "The accumulation of dead cells filled with melanin at the skin's surface causes darker skin tone, uneven complexion and brown spots. Even if the skin tone is darkened by the production of melanin, this condition is temporary and the skin will eventually revert to its initial color." However, she stresses that when production and transfer of melanin becomes excessive and continuous, and excessive accumulation of dead cells occurs, the skin color no longer reverts to its initial appearance and remains dark. It is these dark areas that become freckles or brown spots.

Lastly, she cites the role of UV exposure in accelerating and intensifying melanin production. "UVA rays penetrate very deeply in the epidermis and can directly stimulate melanin production. UVB rays, on the other hand, are more energetic and can induce skin pigmentation through an indirect process."

How then can a woman combat skin pigmentation and correct skin darkening prob-

OUT/ p.C2

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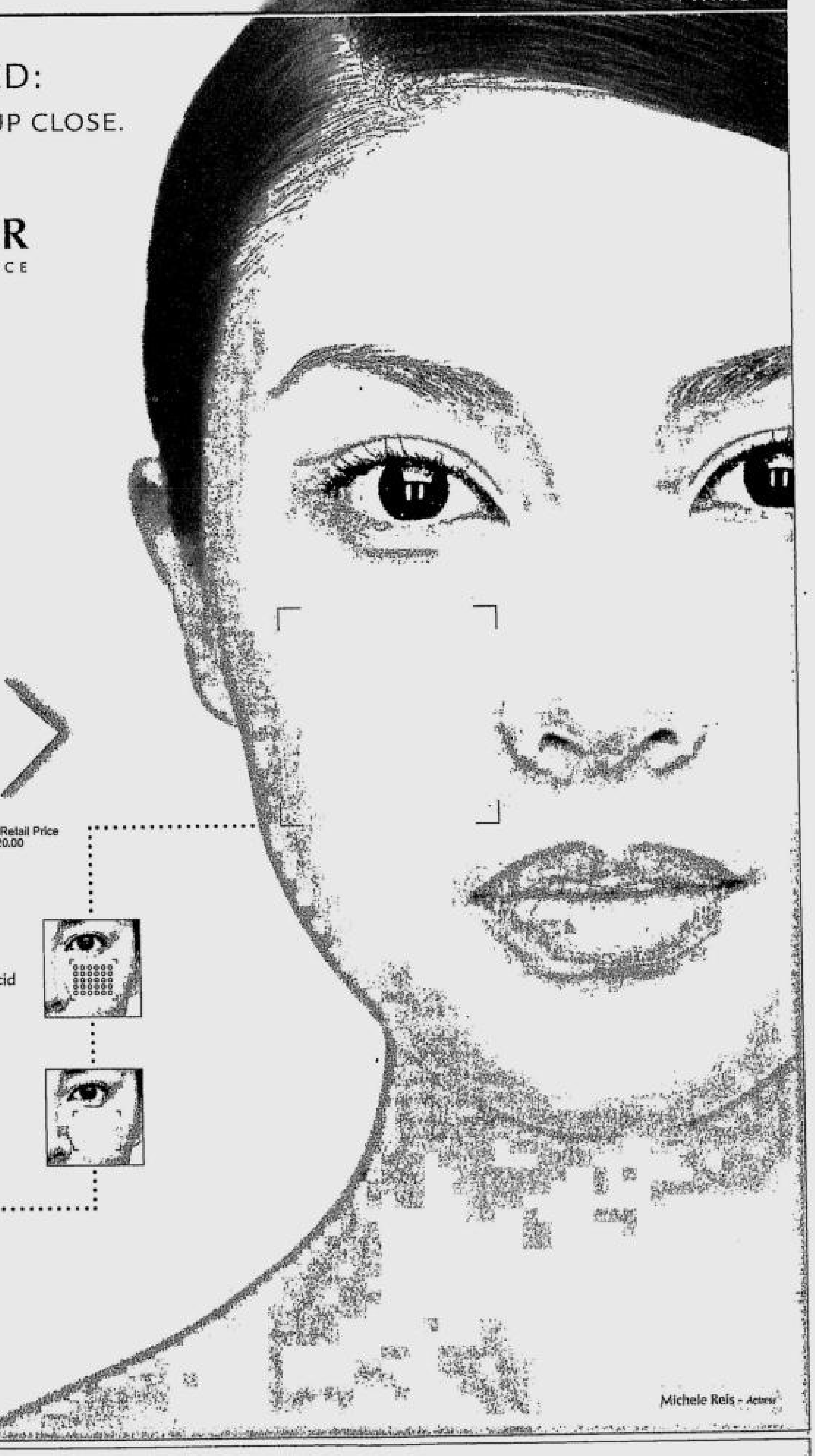
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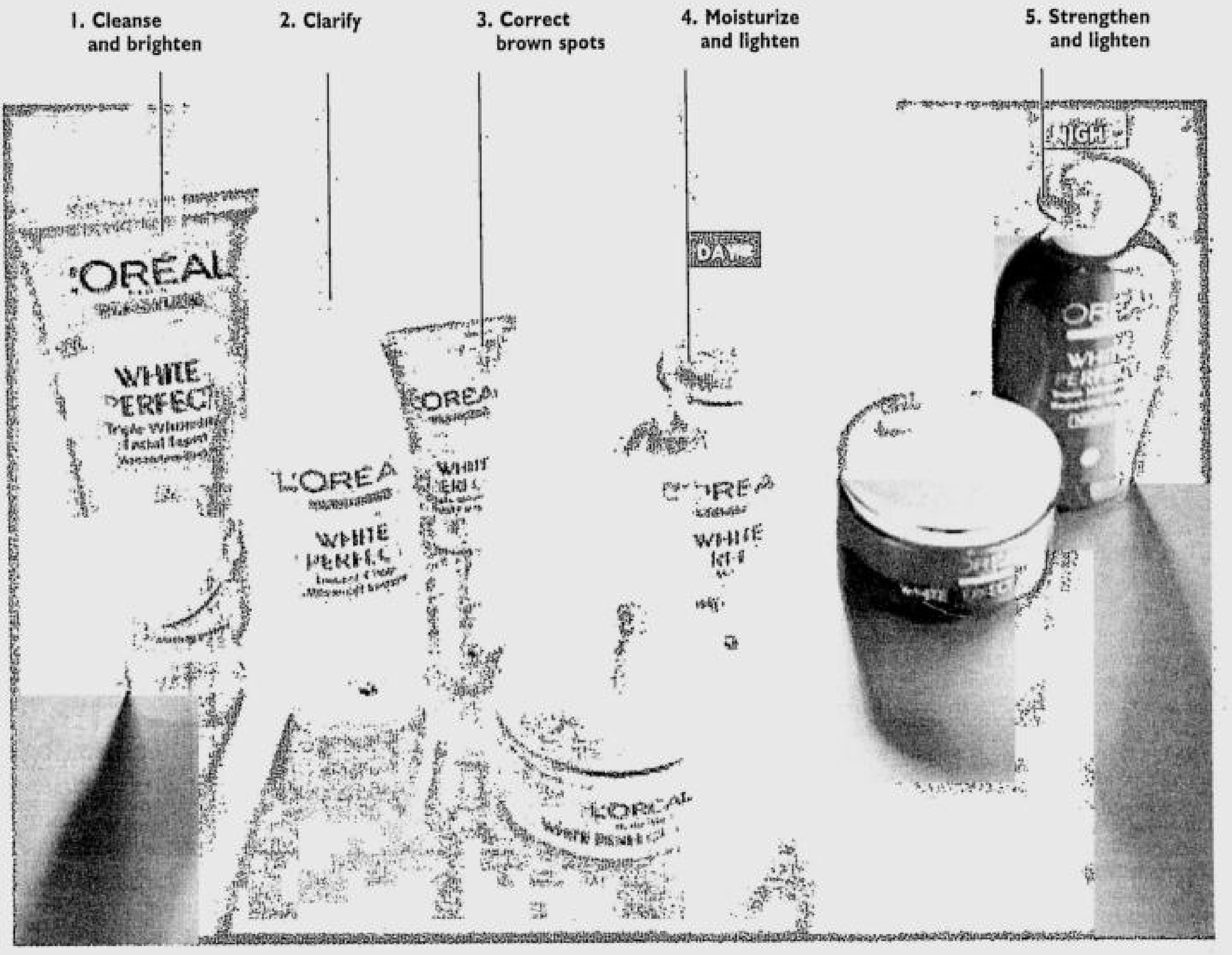
Out of the dark and into the light

From page C1

lems such as brown spots and freckles? Takahashi says that women should use products that act day and night at each level of the skin darkening process. She suggests using a three-step skin care program that protects the skin from UV rays, reduces or regulates the continuous synthesis of melanin in the skin, even at night and gently exfoliates the skin to avoid the accumulation of dead cells at the surface to recover a fair, transparent and spotless complexion.



Skin care program

L'Oreal's response to this need is the White Perfect Triple Whitening Range, which has melanin block that acts at each step of the skin darkening process. First, it regulates the production of melanin because of its powerful whitening molecule melanin block. Secondly, it gently exfoliates the skin. With the L'Oreal-patented BHA, it acts to clear off dark dead cells filled with melanin from the skin's surface. It also contains Vitamin C, which is known to enhance skin radiance. More importantly, the products protect against UVA and UVB rays, which are responsible for triggering melanin productions. The product line contains the L'Oreal-patented Mexoryl SX, which is one of the most effective filters against short UVA and prevents the reappearance of brown spots.

The White Perfect Night formula cream/lotion also acts on the skin in the evening while the skin is sheltered from external aggression. Takahashi says that in the evenings cells renew themselves faster but the production of melanin goes on. "Night is an ideal time to advance the whitening action, and to strengthen skin cells, for better resistance against UV rays the day after." The White Perfect Night formula contains melanin block, BHA to exfoliate gently and the Cyto-Repair-complex, a powerful antioxidant and Cyto-photoprotector. It inhibits the formation of Pyrimidine dimers, one of the major causes of DNA alteration induced by UVB rays and at the same time, protects the Langerhans Cells which are partly responsible for the skin's immunity and especially sensitive to UVB rays.

The White Perfect Triple Whitening Spot Corrector is an essential part of the program.

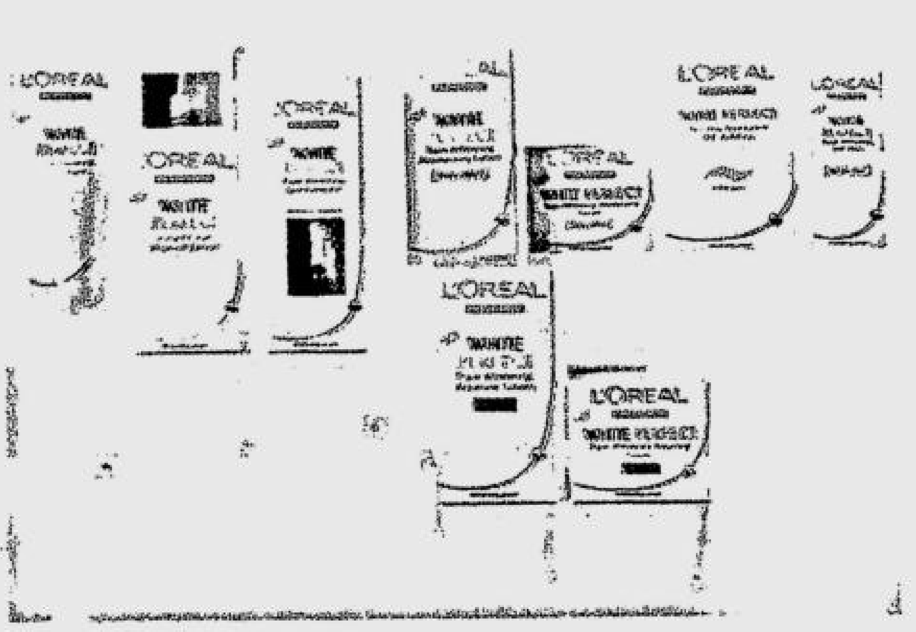
It contains highly concentrated active ingredients which give it an enhanced efficiency on brown spots. This is to be used in tandem with the moisturizing cream or lotion for day, which both contain SPF 15 protection. In the evenings, you can pair it with the night formula. Ideally, one should start with White Perfect Facial foam for cleansing. Follow it with the spot corrector and then the moisturizer for daytime use. In the evenings, cleanse with the foam. The spot corrector is optional at night, so after cleansing, apply the night formula cream/lotion to get maximum benefit.

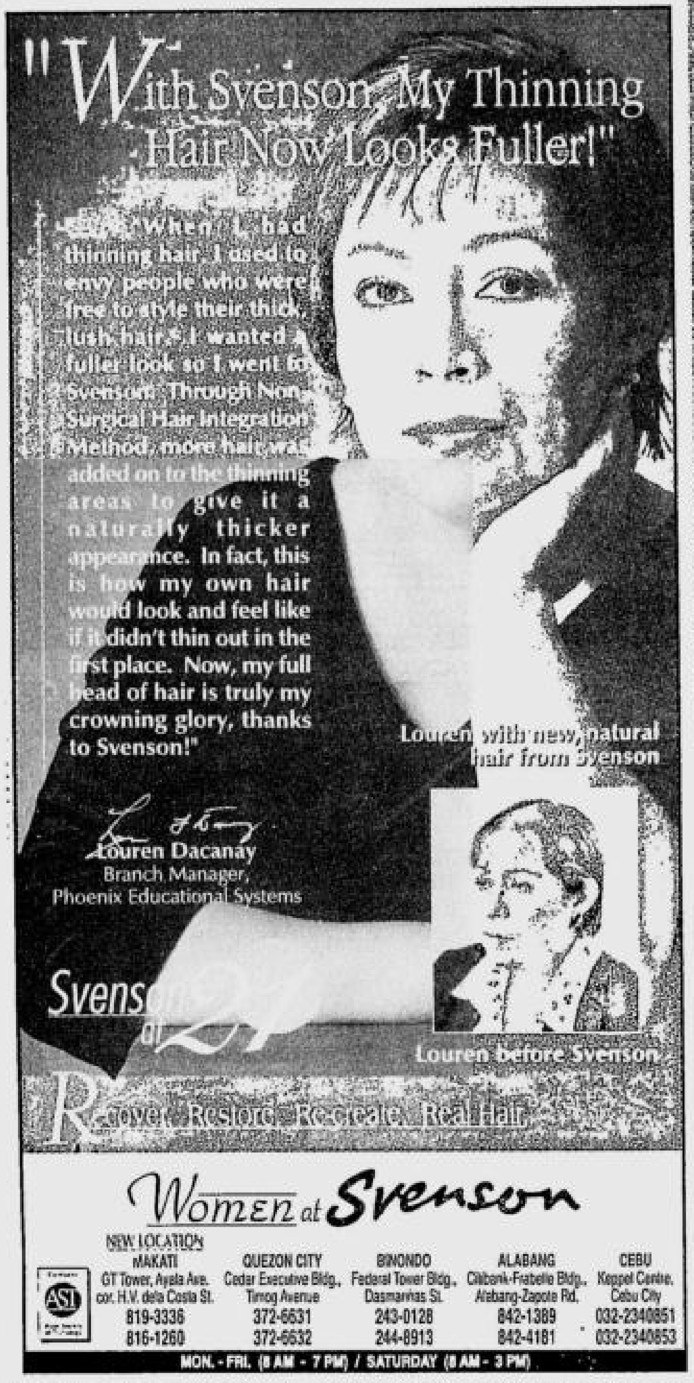
Clinically proven results from studies conducted in Thailand show that after four weeks, among 30 women who used the White Perfect Triple Whitening Moisture Cream with SPF 15, 84 percent observed that their brown spots became lighter while 87 percent reported more luminous skin and 81 percent said their skin became visibly fairer. The same group reported a 90 percent satisfaction and more transparent and luminous skin after using the White Perfect Triple Whitening Night formula lotion/cream.

Even more impressive was the study conducted in Japan. Ninety percent of 30 respondents observed efficiency against brown spots and 87 percent reported a more even and transparent skin after using the White Perfect Triple Whitening Spot Corrector for eight weeks.

Indeed, women who love the outdoors can safely use the products but need to use sunblock with high SPF for added protection. Thus, freckles and age spots become less pronounced for women who love the outdoors and have already taken the extra effort to avoid unnecessary sun exposure. The White Perfect products are very popular with Asian women such as lovely Hong Kong actress Michele Reis, L'Oreal spokesperson for the White Perfect line, who embodies the luminous and light skin that the product range promises.

E-mail the author at cbguballa@inquirer.com.ph

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After finishing his degree in Medicine at the University of the Philippines, **Dr. Rene Vincent S. Levosada** chose to specialize in Orthopedic Surgery. Doc Rene has been in the practice of his profession for eight years now and has been an accredited MEDICard provider for two years. He is a Diplomate to the Philippine Board of Orthopedics and a Fellow to the Philippine Orthopedic Association. He is a family man and spends most of his free time with his wife Cristina and their daughter Jilly. For your orthopedic consultation needs at Medical City General Hospital, visit Dr. Levosada at MEDICard's Satellite Clinic, from Mondays to Fridays, 2 to 4 PM.

The hospital administrator and former Medical Director of Lipa Medix Medical Center, **Dr. Jose Rene D. De Grano** has been part of MEDICard's top notch service providers for 4 years now. He earned his degree in Medicine from the University of the Philippines and his residency training for his specialization in OB-Gynecology in UP-PGH. Dr. De Grano also holds a Masters Degree in Hospital Administration from Ateneo de Manila which he finished in 2000. Outside his work, Doc Jose spends most of his time with his wife Vilma and their children. He also takes time to enjoy his hobbies, bowling and photography. For your consultation needs, visit Dr. De Grano at the C.P. Reyes Hospital in Tanauan, Batangas every Tuesday from 1 to 2 in the afternoon.

MEDICard is proud to have **Dr. Jose Salvador Z. Castillo** as a part of its roster of accredited dental healthcare providers. Dr. Castillo has more than 11 years of experience in the field of Dentistry. He finished Dental Medicine at Centro Escolar University in 1990 and in 1997, his preceptorship in General Orthodontics. He also has a Degree in Liberal Arts from the same school which he finished in 1986. Doc Jose is affiliated to the Philippine Dental Association, International Association for Orthodontics, and the American Association for Functional Orthodontics. He is married to Ma. Primrose Castillo, also a dentist, with whom he has two wonderful daughters. Currently, Dr. Castillo holds his private clinic at Unit O. 2/F Azucena Arcade Bldg., 225 Real St., Pamplona, Las Piñas City. You may visit him for your dental healthcare needs from Mondays to Saturdays from 2 to 5 in the afternoon.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

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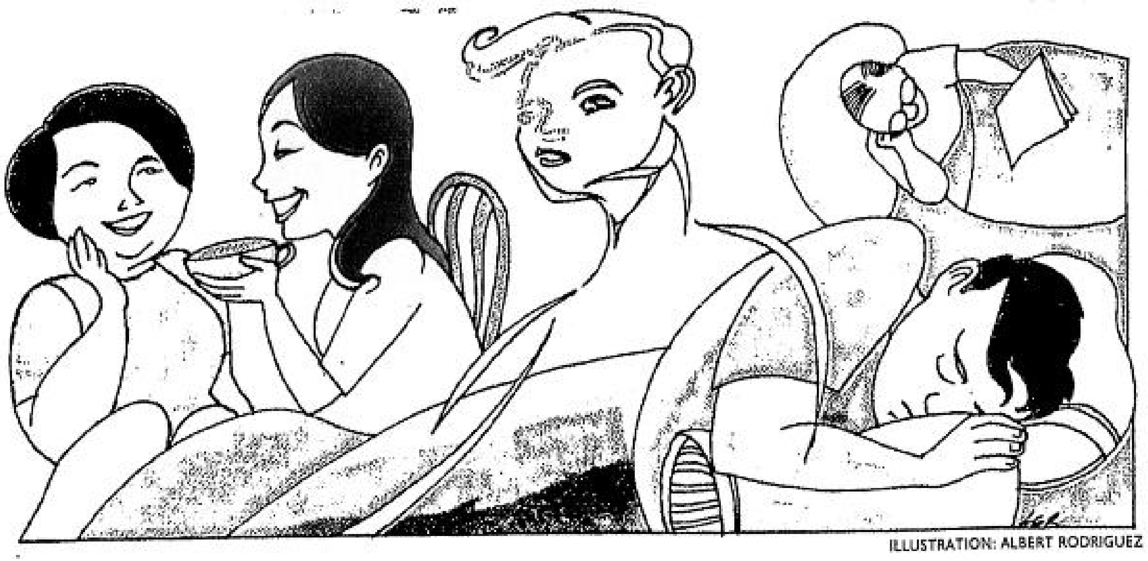

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Common questions asked about astral travel

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

This is a continuation of the column on astral projection or out-of-body experience, which came out on April 16.

CAN you get lost in coming back to your physical body?

No such thing. You will always manage to get back to your physical body even if they move your body elsewhere. You are still connected to it through the silver cord. If something happens to your physical body, or if there is any danger to it, you will immediately get back.

One time I woke up and I could see what's happening around the house and what the people were saying or doing but I also knew at the same time that I was in bed sleeping. How do you explain this?

You were really out of your body looking at everybody, but since you did not know this, you thought you were in bed sleeping. This is astral projection of the second type, i.e. involuntary and conscious.

Can you be harmed or attacked by other beings in the astral plane? What should you do when that happens?

Not everyone who goes into the astral plane sees other beings. I have not experienced such thing during my many out-of-body experiences. Maybe I never go higher enough for that level where I can meet them. I just remain on lower physical level not on higher astral planes. But in case this attack happens, the suggestion is for you to raise your vibrations to a higher level where they cannot reach you. How do you do that? Think of your highest good, or of your God, or your spirit protectors. That will do the trick.

Can you spy on military sites or industrial activities of your competitors while you are out of your body?

Theoretically, there's nothing to prevent you from doing this. But it is not as easy as you may want. There is also psychic protection we have discovered in the astral world. You can protect your privacy from ordinary prying astral eyes. But this type of spying can be done by the adepts or masters but only with permission. Ethics must also be practiced in the astral plane.

The second time I had an out-of-body experience I felt somebody in the room with me. I looked to my left and saw a man wearing a blue shirt whose eyes were full of hatred. He growled at me, and the next thing I knew, we were fighting over my body. Mentally I said the Lord's Prayer and sang Church songs I knew. Then I woke up still singing those religious songs. But it took me a while before I could get up. I was exhausted.

Another time I encountered a mischievous spirit who kept telling me to wake up and I did.

My father and sister also can astral travel. But only I encounter those body thieves. How come? And how do I prevent that from happening again?

I do not want to consciously astral travel. Is there a way to prevent that?

I believe that the first incident you mentioned was not a simple case of astral travel but was an attempt at spirit possession. There was an evil spirit in the room intent on using your body for its own earth-bound purpose. A real battle took place between you and that negative entity that's why you felt exhausted.

Not all astral trips are the same. There are bad trips. To prevent that from happening, program your brain before sleeping that if ever you spontaneously go out of your body, you will only go to beautiful and pleasant places. Avoid going to sleep in a negative mood, such as if you feel depressed, angry, jealous, envious, sad or whatever. That helps to attract negative spirits to you.

The other entity you encountered who was telling you to wake up was not mischievous at all. It helped you to gain control over yourself by waking you up.

It is not possible for you to stop to consciously travel out of your body, because this is a natural occurrence for you and is part of your personality and awareness. There is nothing wrong with it. In fact some people pay large sums of money to learn how to do this.

There are many things you can learn out of body. First, you can gain great spiritual insights and knowledge. Second, you can commune or talk with higher beings and spirit guides. Third, you will learn what really happens after we die and will lose the fear of death. Fourth, your psychic powers will grow fast and you can help understand better the spirit world.

It is only your fear that keeps you from progressing in your knowledge and from gaining control over your astral body when you are out of your physical body. Astral travel is a wonderful experience. Welcome it rather than try to avoid it. You have a rare gift normally reserved only for saints and highly evolved mystics.

Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City or e-mail me at jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Visit my website at http://j.licauco.tripod.com. Listen to my dzMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.

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Old-timer becomes newest kid on the health and beauty block

By Rowena C. Burgos

FEW things stir the soul like a skin-care regimen that gives you a sensuous all-over glow; arresting makeup in sun-kissed hues; touchable, fuss-free hair; and a fragrance that captures summer's breeziness in a bottle.

Such enticing offerings can be found at Watsons, a beauty and health haven familiar to Filipinos who have traveled to other cities in Asia. Indeed, no trip to Hong Kong or Singapore is complete without a swing by a Watsons.

Last Friday, Watsons formally opened its latest outlets at the second levels of SM Megamall and The Podium in Mandaluyong. You can actually get your beauty fix at any of the 64 Watsons health, beauty and pharmacy stores in the country.

The health and beauty center offers a range of more than 25,000 different products from more than 20 countries, including cosmetics, toiletries, fashion items, medicines, confectionery, cards and toys. Its motto should be: if Watsons doesn't carry it, you probably don't need it! It also proffers professional consultations on makeup and skin care.

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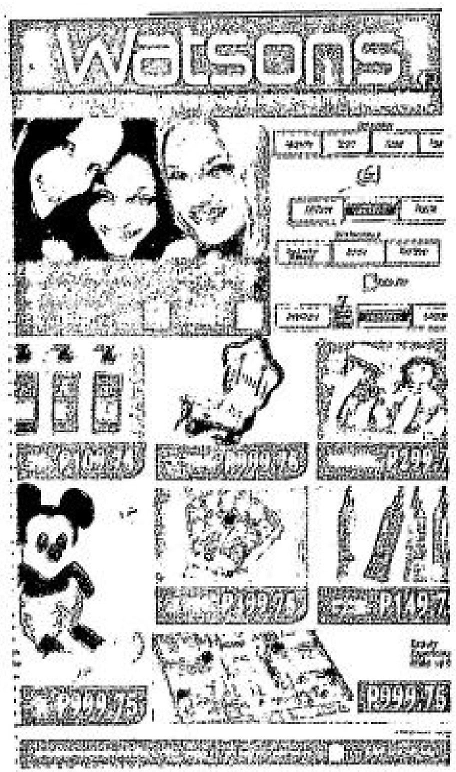
pharmacy self care

HEALTH and fitness adviser shows pharmacy self-care leaflet to a customer at Watsons in Hong Kong.



BEAUTY and health products available at Watsons at SM Megamall A and The Podium

Asia-wide

One of Asia's largest retail groups, with stores in Hong Kong, Mainland China, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand, Watsons in the Philippines is a joint venture with Health and Beauty and Family Drugstore, members of the SM Group of Co.

"This is the first major foreign investment of an international retail chain store in the country since the Philippine government revamped its foreign investment policy in March 2000 to enable overseas investment in the retail industry," says Ian Wade, group managing director, A.S. Watson & Co., Ltd.

The new company has rebranded SM's Health and Beauty stores with the popular name Watsons: Your Personal Store. It plans to add another 15 new branches in the first year to serve Filipino consumers nationwide.

"Watsons has a strong brand identity and a long-standing reputation for quality and innovation in the personal care store arena. This will enable us to increase opportunities in servicing the growing consumer market," says Teresita Sy Coson, SM president.

Dennis Casey, managing director of Watsons Phils., adds that the joint venture demonstrates the company's strong confidence in the country's consumer market. "SM has provided the opportunity for Watsons to expand further in Asia by establishing an important foothold in the Philippines, a relatively new and young market with the ideal target consumer."

Considering how important it is to many people to shop in stores that offer broad selections, a pleasant atmosphere and a place where they feel welcome when they shop, Watsons has introduced three formats of combined health and beauty stores, drugstores and beauty/cosmetics departments.

Humble origins

The history of Watsons dates back to 1828 when this small dispensary began providing free medical services to the poor of Canton.

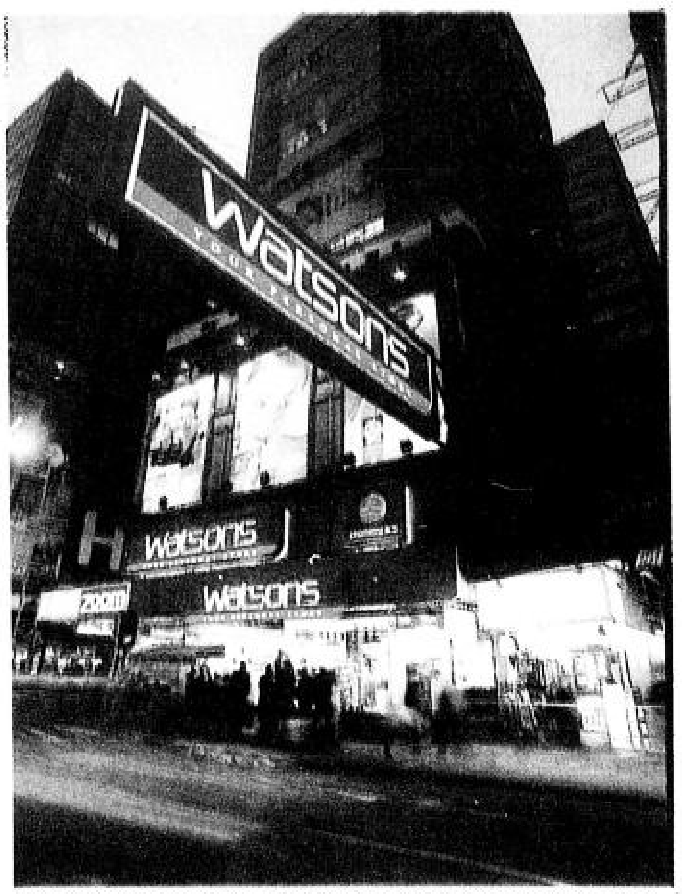
In 1858, Alexander Skirving Watson joined the company as manager and later became the junior managing partner. Subsequently, A.S. Watson & Co. expanded overseas, establishing a pharmacy in 1883 and a soft-drinks factory in Manila in 1884. The company was issued a certificate of incorporation in Hong Kong in 1886.

Today, ASW is an international retail and manufacturing company with operations in 17 countries in Asia and Europe. The group operates over 1,200 retail stores, owns more than 20 water and juice brands and employs 27,000 staff worldwide.

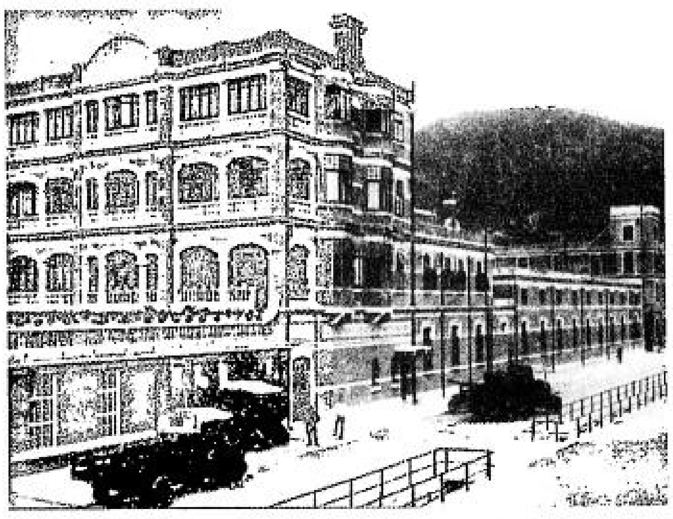
Customers will be happy to see high-quality products with new nutrients and technology behind them. Solutions for a variety of concerns, such as sun damage, the environment or internal stress are also available through Watson's skin care lines that address the needs of young clients along with adult concerns.

The store's revitalized retail program includes trusted local brands, but what endears it most to consumers is its insistence on carrying as wide a range of products as possible that most people use on a daily basis.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph



THE SHOP front of Watsons Your Personal Store in Hong Kong



WATSONS' water factory at North Point (now Seaview Estate on Watson Road) in Hong Kong in 1906

TRENDY sportswear at the Philippine Fashion Week

Sports gear for nonstop performance

ADIDAS has evolved beyond its serious sports image. At the recent Philippine Fashion Week held at the Glorietta Activity Center, the sports clothing and accessories brand launched its newest lifestyle and leisure wear.

Forever Short features very fashionable sporty outfits for both young and old. The Originals are reintroduced, reinterpreted and redesigned Adidas products patterned after the old Originals in style, experience and craftsmanship. The Originals have been updated for the fashion milieu of today and produced in limited numbers.

Fashion Week also served as the launching pad for the brand's technological breakthrough in footwear: the revolutionary ClimaCool—the first completely breathable shoe to step on Philippine soil. Designed with a 360-degree ventilation system, it is regarded as the only shoe that allows the feet to "feel the breeze."

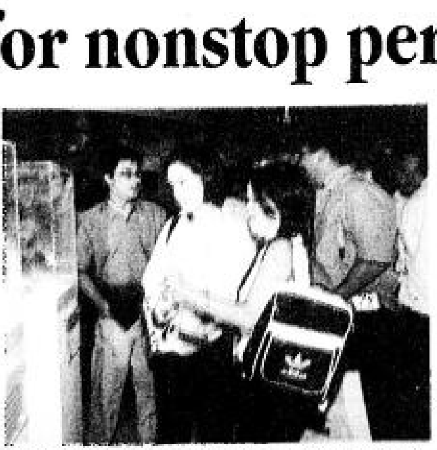
Then there was Adidas' line of sportswear, footwear and accessories. The new collections—ClimaLite and Infinitex—display the impeccable taste, sophistication and inventiveness of the Adidas team of designers.

ClimaLite comprises bright-colored sports and fitness wear created from highly engineered materials that keep the body sweat-free, dry and, most importantly, comfortable. Definitely the gear for nonstop high performance.

Infinitex, on the other hand, consists of swimsuits, tops and trunks. More than the new colors and designs, the entire collection boasts of unique fabrics that last longer even when exposed to chlorinated pool water. Infinitex gives longer-lasting fit and usage, as well as comfort during competition and leisure swim.

World Cup, Adidas' trendy shirts, shorts, bags and caps pay homage to the world's biggest sporting event, next to the Olympics. Also featured were the Adidas Taylor Made golf apparel for the serious and not-so-serious golfers.

Based on the warm reception and loud applause it received from the spectators that evening, Adidas had once again re-established its status as a leader in the industry.



ALBERT and Liezl Martinez with Adidas' Odette Velarde

PAOLO Bediones with Adidas president and managing director John Alonte and Angelica Suiza

COUTURE by Yohji Yamamoto

Hormones can rule over one's state of mind

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

ARE there similarities between love and madness? Popular expressions like "I'm crazy over you" or "I'm madly in love with you" may not be so far removed from the truth after all. Neuroscientists are presently studying the brain and how being in love and being crazy may have similarities.

Young love, early madness?

Studies reveal that lovers (especially in the early stages of falling in love) experience light-headedness, euphoria, loss of appetite and sleeplessness. In short, couples obsessively in love exhibit the same symptoms as those who are obsessive-compulsive, a psychological condition. (Curiously, a dosage of cocaine can trigger the same symptoms!) This is because the brain releases extra doses of hormones that cause these same sensations.

Runner's high: Even fitness buffs know the feeling—the same effect is experienced when the body undertakes physical activity in the form of rigorous exercise. Therefore, general feelings of well-being can be induced by exercise, love or drugs. Among the three options, the first two would prove to be the safest to your health.

Something chemical: While the body chemistry of men is different from women from early youth to mid-adulthood, an astounding revelation has been discovered—that in later years men and women's body chemistries become more similar. Testosterone levels in men decline while women's estrogen levels decline (as testosterone rises). This hormone cycle stimulates couples through three stages in a relationship: attraction (madness), obsession and bonding, which also explains how and why relationships evolve.

Reviving the flame

Why wait for hormones to rule over your mood or state of mind? Here is one mental exercise you can do in order to evoke genuinely good emotions. It has everything to do with balls of light. Want to rev up your passions? Try red. For tranquility, blue is for you. Choose your color.

Imagine a ball of light in the far horizon. It represents your need at the moment. Invite it to come closer. Now it is in front of you. It begins to enlarge (because you want to increase its presence in your life). By this time, it is so big that it engulfs you. You are now inside the ball. Feel its energy. Absorb it. Then allow it to shrink until it is the size of a basketball resting in your hands. This symbolizes control of your own emotions. From now, anytime you wish to evoke these feelings—passion or tranquility—all you have to do is to repeat the exercise.

Joyful bliss

A generous serving of soybeans, bean curd or soymilk has been known to improve women's hormone levels because soy contains bioflavonoids and mood-altering properties. Make sure you include soy in your diet beginning today.

Feel-rite ritual: Bath rituals are a must if you are taking your pampering time seriously. In a tub of warm water, add three drops of lavender or rose essential oils (premixed in a natural oil) like olive or corn. Throw in petals of your favorite flower—*sampaguita*, jasmine, rose, etc. If you don't have the essential oils, floral petals will do. Soak for seven minutes. If you don't have a bathtub, pour the mixture all over your body but not before you do an inhalation of it. (Mix the ingredients in a bowl of hot water.) Place a towel on your head and take in the vapors. Relax.

Human beings are not mere logic machines, neither are we a bundle of unrestrained emotions; we are a mixture of both. And while scientists are still trying to unravel the mystery that surrounds emotions and the mind-body connection, I say, who cares? For as long as you've got that loving feeling, nothing really matters.

Forever young

The public is invited to my book launching on May 11-12 at the main lobby of the Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center. Activities include aerobics fun match, classes in yoga, Pilates, healthy heart cooking, pranic healing orientation, free beauty makeovers, facials, skin care and body care consultations, health talks by noted speakers on weight loss and hormone health, Latin dance workout. Special appearance by the PBA champs Shark, Alma Concepcion, Plinky Recto, Poncy Quirino, The Philippine Body Builders Association, Dr. Joel Mendez and Dr. Victor Vesuña.

Call 637-9653/55.

E-mail the author at coryquirino_fy@yahoo.com

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May 1 - 31

Item	Price	Reg. Price
Gardenia U.S. Thick Slice 600g	₱26.30/pack	Reg. Price P30.90
Purefoods Chinese Luncheon Meat 340g	₱32.50 each	Reg. Price P39.00
Century Tuna Flakes in Vegetable Oil 180g	₱20.75 each	Reg. Price P21.75
Best Foods Say Cheeez! Pimiento 220ml	₱29.00 each	Reg. Price P31.00
Johnson's Baby Cologne (Morning Dew) 125ml	₱45.50 each	Reg. Price P52.50
Gardenia Hi-Calcium Loaf 400g	₱22.25/pack	Reg. Price P26.00
Purefoods Carne Norte 175g	₱19.80 each	Reg. Price P21.00
Century Tuna Hot & Spicy 180g	₱20.75 each	Reg. Price P21.75
Lady's Choice Sandwich Spread 220ml	₱32.00 each	Reg. Price P34.25
Band-Aid 70% Isopropyl Alcohol 500ml	₱35.50 each	Reg. Price P40.00
Pepsi Twist in can 330ml (4's)	₱39.75/pack	Reg. Price P43.00
Anchor Full Cream Milk Powder 800g	₱171.10	Reg. Price P172.95
Magnolia Chocolait 120ml	₱6.80 each	Reg. Price P7.25
Doritos Nacho Cheese 180g	₱58.70 each	Reg. Price P59.50
Ariel Detergent Powder 800g	₱114.00	Reg. Price P126.50
Pepsi Regular in can 330ml (8's)	₱79.75/pack	Reg. Price P86.00
Anchor Full Cream Milk Powder 450g	₱93.25 each	Reg. Price P97.00
Carnation Condensada 300ml	₱23.55 each	Reg. Price P24.00
Doritos Taco 180g	₱58.70 each	Reg. Price P59.50
Safeguard Citrus 135 ml	₱20.25 each	Reg. Price P22.75
Supersavers Refined Sugar 1kg	₱26.25	
Supersavers Refined Sugar 2kg	₱52.50	
Supersavers Fresh Eggs (Medium)	₱37.00/dozen	Reg. Price P38.00
Watermelon	₱20.00/kg	
Supersavers Whole Frozen Chicken	₱60.25/kg	
Batangas Tilapia*	₱51.00/kg	Reg. Price P53.00
Bangus (medium)**	₱79.00/kg	Reg. Price P82.50
Supersavers 2-ply Bathroom Tissue (9's)	₱88.50	Reg. Price P93.00

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- Robinsons Town Mall Los Baños
- Tutuban Center
- Metropolis Star, Alabang
- Target Mall, Sta. Rosa, Laguna

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1518 Series of 2002

Don't let the sun catch you without skin protection

By Alex Y. Vergara

HOW your skin looks today depends on how exposed it has been to the sun during the first 20 years of your life. Put another way, 85 percent of what you see today in the mirror is the result of photoaging. The more exposed you've been to the sun in your younger years, the more rough, wrinkled, uneven and leathery your skin appears today.

"If you have been protecting yourself from the sun since you were a child," says Dr. Marie Socuer Medina Oblepias, "you would look younger now than people your age who had been more exposed to it when they were young. Chances are they would look older than their actual ages."

Oblepias, a consultant dermatologist for the Research Institute of Tropical Medicine in Parañaque and a member of the Neutrogena Neu Woman board, warns of the ugly effects of photodamage on the skin, especially this summer when all roads lead to the beach or mountain hideaways. Yes, even a trip to cool Baguio.

"The higher the altitude," she explains, "the more intense is the sun exposure."

This explains why a trip to mountainous Baguio can sometimes cause sunburn. Aside from proximity to the equator, such environmental elements as white sand, concrete, water and snow also intensify the sun's darkening and harmful effects.

Due to lack of melanin in their skin, fair-skinned people, of course, are more at risk to the sun's ill effects. Melanin are pigments in the skin responsible for its color. The darker a person's color is, the more melanin he has in his skin.

Protection

As part of the ABCs of protection and prevention, Oblepias tells her patients to avoid the midday sun and long periods of sun exposure. Deliberate sunbathing is out of the question. "Try scheduling your outdoor activities early in the morning or late in the afternoon."

If they must go outdoors, she advises them to block out the sun's harmful rays with a broad-spectrum sunblock with sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15.

SPF is roughly the amount of time you can safely stay outdoors before your skin starts to turn red. Threshold to the sun varies for each individual.

DR. Marie Socuer Oblepias

Applying sunblock with, say, SPF 15 allows you to stay under the sun 15 times longer than you could without any protection. Apply the sunblock 20 minutes before stepping outdoors to allow the skin to absorb it. Reapply every hour if you're swimming or golfing.

But not just any kind of sunblock will do. A chemical variant absorbs the sun's UVB before it penetrates deep into the skin, while a physical sunblock reflects the sun's glare so it bounces off the skin. So which is better?

"A physical sunblock," says Oblepias. For one, the skin doesn't absorb it so you get less of the chemical reaction. "It's safer for babies and people with sensitive skin."

Read the label first. A physical sunblock is primarily made of titanium dioxide or zinc oxide. A chemical variant is usually made of octhylmetoxy cinnamates and can only block UVB.

Higher doesn't necessarily mean better. You'll still get dark, says Oblepias, even if you wear a sunblock with SPF 60. Therein also lies the superiority of physical sunblocks over chemical ones.

"Chemical sunblocks usually don't protect one from UVA and its ill effects such as allergies attributed to sun exposure," says Oblepias.

Smart formula

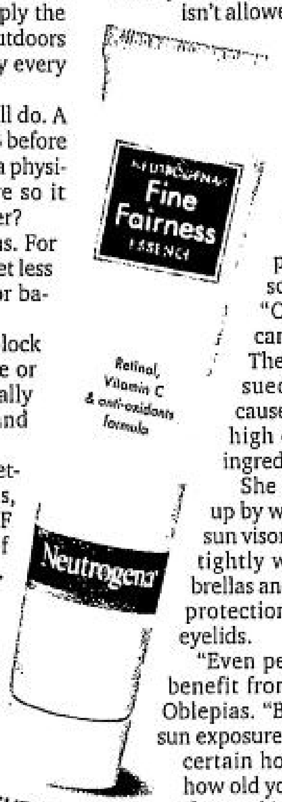
Certain brands such as Neutrogena's Fairness UV Block (SPF 30) are classified as both physical and chemical sunblock, with active ingredients like titanium dioxide (4 percent) and octyl methoxycinnamate (5 percent).

So is it too late to undo the sun's damage on one's skin? It depends on how damaged the skin is. The brand's fairness line, consisting of sunblock, toner, essence and face powder, has also been hailed for its even whitening effect.

"The line is like a 'smart' fairness formula," says Oblepias. "Unlike most whitening brands that whiten every part of the face including the dark areas, Neutrogena has a selective whitening effect."

The fairness essence, for instance, has retinol and Vitamin C. Retinol induces gradual skin peeling, while Vitamin C is a known antioxidant that combats aging. The face powder also has sunshield (SPF 15) and a whitening agent called licorice.

"At the same time they found out that Vitamin C has a selective whitening effect that diminishes age spots," she says, "so you achieve a smoother, more even-toned complexion. Retinol, on the other hand, has been proven to reverse photodamage."



NEUTROGENA'S Fine Fairness Essence

As a practicing dermatologist, Oblepias isn't allowed to endorse any particular brand. Her affiliation with Neutrogena is limited to the annual selection of so-called women achievers. The brand is distributed locally by Johnson & Johnson.

"I'd always advise my patients to stick to prescriptive drugs," she says. "Over-the-counter drugs can only give you so much. They run the risk of getting sued should their products cause adverse reactions due to high concentrations of active ingredients."

She advises patients to cover up by wearing a wide-brim hat (a sun visor won't do), long sleeves or tightly woven clothing. Use umbrellas and wear sunglasses with UV protection to protect the eyes and eyelids.

"Even people as young as 20 can benefit from the fairness line," says Oblepias. "But it's important to keep sun exposure to a minimum and during certain hours of the day no matter how old you are." It pays to take care of your skin while you're young.

E-mail the author at avergara@ inquirer. com.ph

New products focus on lips

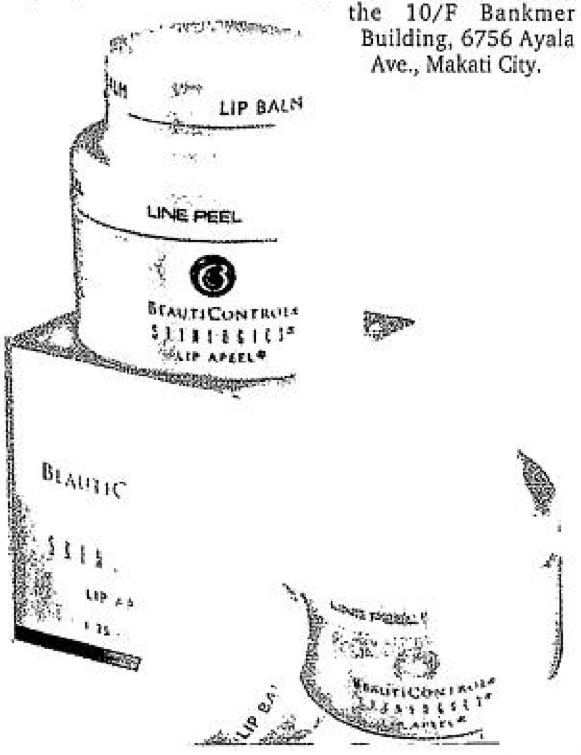
BEAUTICONTROL'S newest revolutionary products include Lip Apeel, Line Peel and Regeneration Gold Lip Therapy.

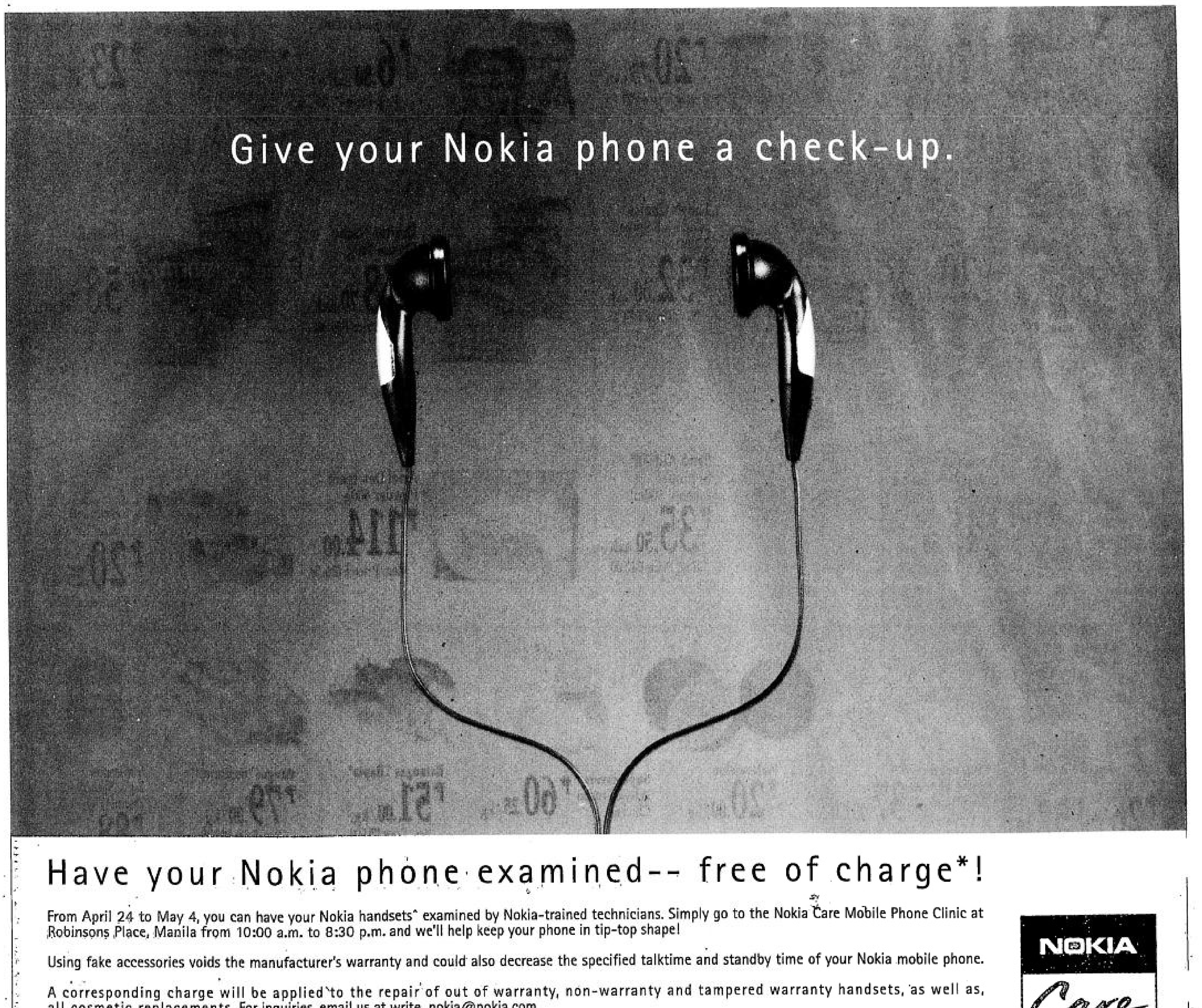
Lip Apeel contains two products that minimize unattractive vertical lines and laugh lines around the lips caused by premature aging, genetics and smoking.

Line Peel removes waxy lipstick buildup that cause uneven lipstick coverage and lip blemishes while the lip balm provides protection against dehydration, leaving you with soft, smooth and young-looking lips.

The Regeneration Gold Lip Therapy gives the luscious lips you desire, thanks to its revolutionary ingredient called Maxilip, a deep-penetrating formula that boosts natural collagen production within two to three weeks. It also has an advanced exfoliating power that minimizes the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles around the lips, repairs dry, chapped lips on contact and effectively eliminates lipstick bleeding. It contains Vitamins A, C, D and E that protect lips against future damage and aging and locks in moisture for soft, smooth, supple lips.

For those interested in becoming BeautiControl image consultants, image managers and distributors, call the BeautiControl hotline at 810-2023 or e-mail BeautiControl.ph@ tupperware.com or drop by the 10/F Bankmer Building, 6756 Ayala Ave., Makati City.





Have your Nokia phone examined-- free of charge*!

From April 24 to May 4, you can have your Nokia handsets^ examined by Nokia-trained technicians. Simply go to the Nokia Care Mobile Phone Clinic at Robinsons Place, Manila from 10:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. and we'll help keep your phone in tip-top shape!

Using fake accessories voids the manufacturer's warranty and could also decrease the specified talktime and standby time of your Nokia mobile phone.

A corresponding charge will be applied to the repair of out of warranty, non-warranty and tampered warranty handsets, as well as, all cosmetic replacements. For inquiries, email us at write_nokia@nokia.com.

^Nokia 3210, 3310, 3330, 3350, 5110, 5110i, 5210, 5510, 6150, 6210, 6250, 6510, 7110, 8210, 8250, 8310, 8850, 8850 Gold, 8855, 8890, 9110, 9110i and 9210
*Free of charge: check-up of all handsets, normal repair of warranty handsets

NOKIA
Care

Fast-acting serums for skin rejuvenation

IT'S called the Rolls Royce of skin care. Reports say it is the top-selling brand for skin care at Rustan's. During the one-day skin care workshop at a five-star hotel, the people manning the counters were able to generate sales of P500,000. There is a line called The Caviar Collection which, by its very name, is the ultimate luxury in skin care. Though a jar retails for approximately $300, it promises "One drop, one minute, results in one fabulous, firm face."

These products that have a long history of addressing the problems of aging skin are perfect for women in search of the proverbial fountain of youth. These top-of-the-line products are made by Laboratories La Prairie.

Laboratories La Prairie traces its heritage to the world-renowned Clinic La Prairie in Montreux, Switzerland. For more than half a century now, the Clinic has been the pioneer in anti-aging cellular therapy. In 1978, it was the first company to apply cellular research to problems of aging skin through Cellular Complex.

In 1987, the company scored a major breakthrough with its Caviar Collection, which taps marine sources as key substances in improving the skin's vitality. The treatment range imparts a radiant appearance within a matter of seconds after application. In 1992, it created the first cosmetic line to incorporate alpha hydroxy acids (AHA). La Prairie further enhanced its product lines by inventing a stabilized, three-phase water-in-oil-water emulsion (WOW) that provides moisturizing, nourishing and protective benefits over 16 hours.

Anti-aging serums

Its most recent addition to its fabulous de-aging line is a collection of six bio-engineered Cellular Serums that target a woman's precise needs and wants. Serums have long been acknowledged in pharmaceutical medicine to be the most direct, targeted and fastest acting therapeutic delivery system.

La Prairie's Swiss Cellular De-Agers allow a woman to create her own individualized treatment regimen. Each serum has been formulated with La Prairie's exclusive Cellular Complex and bio-engineered to work with its sister serums.

The Swiss Cellular De-Agers are the first step in a de-aging program. A corrective or nourishing moisturizer is applied over the serum to address loss of firmness, dehydration and skin fatigue. La Prairie products are safe to use together with other skin care products as long as they do not contain strong ingredients such as AHA or retinol. Cellular Hydrating Serum or The Hydrator is for women who have skin that needs more moisture.

This serum is a "floating" serum that rejuvenates the skin by attracting moisture, binding moisture to the skin and preventing moisture loss by restoring the skin's natural barrier. The Cellular De-Sensitizing Serum or The De-Sensitizer serum helps relieve skin that suffers from the effects of environmental or internal stress.

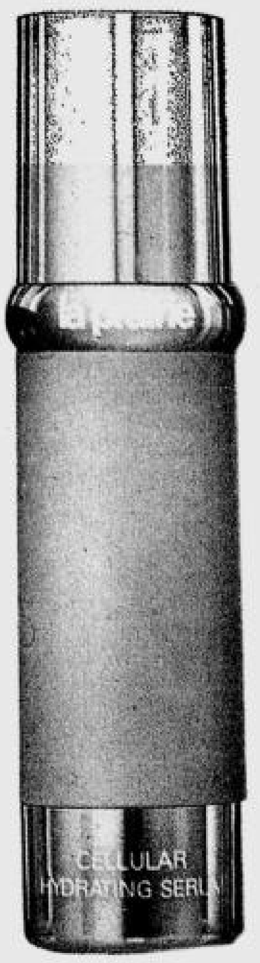
The Cellular Retexturizing Booster or Retexturizer is a nonirritating, aloe-based surface exfoliant that provides rapid retexturization to give skin a smoother, more even appearance. It also contains alpha and beta hydroxy acids to combat lines and wrinkles.

If age spots, dullness and imperfect skin are your problems, the C Energy Cellular Serum or The Illuminator combines an intensive dose of Vitamin C and natural plant extracts to restore radiance and even out skin tone. For lines and wrinkles, the Cellular Retinol Complex P.M. provides intensive overnight de-aging. It combines Co-Enzyme Q10 and Retinol to help diminish lines and wrinkles. Lastly, if your skin is oily and dry in the wrong places, the Cellular Normalizing Serum or The Oil Controller absorbs excess oil and prevents oil breakthrough to sustain an even matte complexion.

The products cost a premium, but the generations of women who have used them attest to their power in turning back the hands of time. For a select group of women, that's a small price to pay to stay forever young.

Cathy Babao-Guballa

E-mail the author at cbguballa@inquirer.com.ph



Top-of-the-line products address the needs of women

LIAA Cojuangco-Bautista

VICKY Morales-Reyno

Skin care company salutes Filipina achievers

IN HONOR of young women achievers in the Philippines, Neutrogena launched in 2001 a campaign dubbed as Neu Woman. The Neu Woman is one with confidence, style and grace; she makes her own choices, leads a balanced life and excels in her career.

For this year, the Neutrogena Neu Woman awardees are:

Gillian Akiko Thompson for sports; Dr. Eileen Abesamis-Cubillan for dermatopathology; Joanna Ongpin-Duarte for fashion retail marketing; Mandy de la Rama-Santos for garment export; Karla Patricia T. Gutierrez for arts; Dr. Luisita Cojuangco-Bautista for pediatrics; Vicky Morales-Reyno for broadcast journalism.

The Neu Woman 2002 awardees were chosen by a Neutrogena Board of Women who are achievers and successful in their fields. The board members include: Thelma San Juan (chair), general manager of ABS-CBN Publishing and editor in chief of Metro Magazine; Marivic Rufino Buenaventura, visual artist and concert producer; Dr. Socceur Oblepias, diplomate of the Philippine Board of Dermatology who is an authority on photodamage and antiaging; Chiqui Brosas-Hahn, former Bb. Pilipinas-Universe title holder, now wife and mother who is considered an authority on natural childbearing methods in the Philippines, for which she is also an instructor, and an advocate of breastfeeding; and Joyce Oreña-Stadler, fashion style columnist.

The awardees for 2001 were Ana Buenaventura (arts), Kara Magsanoc-Alikpala (broadcast communications), Maritoni Rufino-Tordesillas (dance), Liana Romulo (children's book writer/publisher) and Toni Leviste (sports).

EILEEN Liesl Abesamis-Cubillan

A lot of doubts and fears are put to rest simply by asking questions.

Go ahead. Start with, "Can you show me how great it is?"

See. Touch. Feel. Try. Ask. Experience Nokia.

Do what you feel like doing to find out what Nokia phone is best for you! From April 24 to May 4, you will Experience Nokia. This activity will help you understand Nokia phones better, so you can make the right choice. Come visit us at Robinsons Place, Manila from 10:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

After you Experience Nokia, you'll know why you love Nokia. For inquiries, email us at write_nokia@nokia.com

NOKIA
CONNECTING PEOPLE

Old-timer becomes newest kid on the health and beauty block

Story on page C4

40 Cellphones To Be Won!
CREATIVE WORLD
DMC

CROSS-STITCH FOR A PHONE

20 Winners: **Nokia 5210** *(UNIT ONLY)* **STORE PRIZE: P1,000.00**

20 Winners: **Nokia 3350** *(UNIT ONLY)* **STORE PRIZE: P1,000.00**

HOW TO JOIN:

1. Buy any twenty-four (24) skeins of DMC threads from any participating craftstore nationwide.

2. Collect and cut out the DMC box flaps with security marks "Exclusively Distributed by Focus Global Inc. for Philippine Market Only". The participant will get one (1) box for every single purchase of twelve (12) skeins from a craftstore. So a 24 skeins purchase entitles the participant to two (2) box flaps.

3. On the back of two box flaps, write or type your name, address, telephone number, if any, and affix your signature. Plus the name and address of store where DMC threads were bought. Erasures on the box flaps will disqualify the entry. Do not use lead pencils to avoid erasures.

Name:
Address:
Tel No:
Signature:
Store Partner:
Store Partner Address:

4. Enclose 24 skein bands or labels with bar code and the 2 box flaps in a WHITE LEGAL-SIZE envelop. Write GMA Luzon, Visayas or Mindanao to indicate area. Incomplete entries will be disqualified.

5. Mail entries to: "DMC Cross-Stitch for a Phone Promo" c/o Focus Global Inc. Pioneer cor. Reliance Sts., Mandaluyong City 1550. Or, drop entries in designated dropboxes at selected craftstores nationwide, or in the drop box located at Focus Global Inc.

6. One envelop, one entry. Send as many entries as you want. The more entries, the more chances of winning.

7. Only entries received on or before November 30, 2002 shall be qualified.

8. Raffle Draw will be held on December 14, 2002 at 9:00 am at the Focus Global Inc. Bldg., in the presence of a DTI representative.

9. A participant can only win once. Should his/her name be drawn more than once, he/she shall get the bigger prize.

10. Winners will be notified by registered mail and will be announced in a leading national daily newspaper. Prizes may be claimed at the Focus Global Inc. office upon presentation of a valid ID. Provincial winners may claim their prize from their store partner.

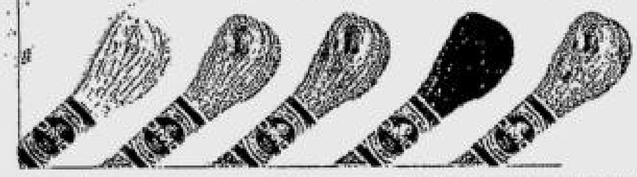
11. Prizes are tax-paid and not convertible to cash. Prizes not redeemed within 60 days after notification will be forfeited upon approval of DTI.

12. Employees of Focus Global Inc. and its ad agencies, as well as their relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining.

13. Owners and employees of craftstores and DMC outlets, as well as their relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity are also disqualified from the promo. Craftstore owners only qualify as store partners.

PROMO IS FROM MAY 1 TO NOVEMBER 30, 2002
RAFFLE DRAW IS ON DECEMBER 14, 2002

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1588 Series of 2002.



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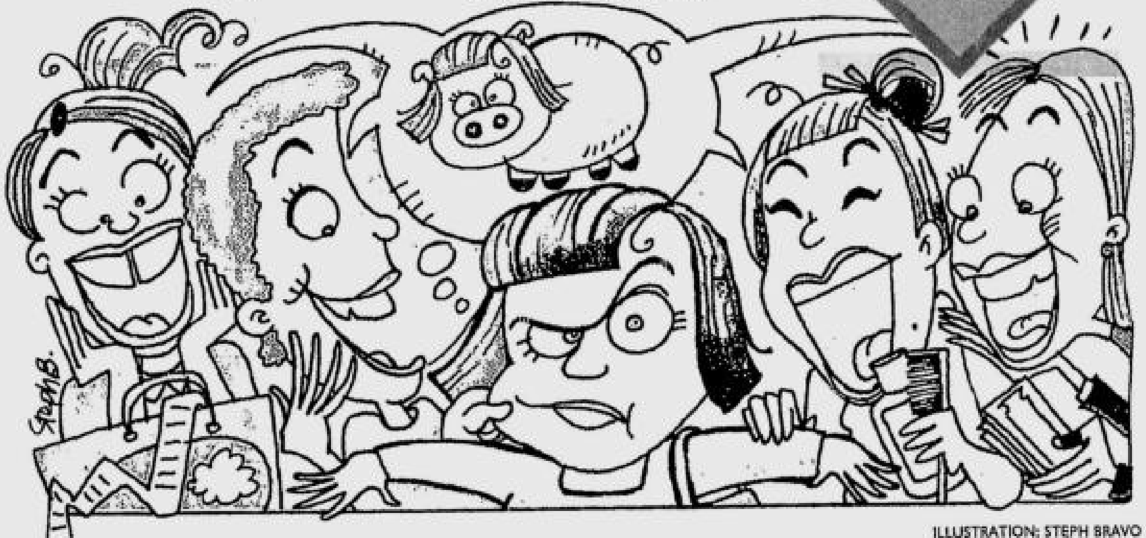

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

How to stop other people from saying negative things about your body

Experts say you shouldn't respond passively by keeping quiet nor should you respond aggressively by attacking people

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

LAST week, while at the beauty parlor, one of the beauticians told me that I had gained weight. Her exact words were, "Ma'am, *parang tumaba ka*." Then just two days later, in another beauty parlor, the beautician there told me that I looked like I had lost weight. Aside from the fact that they had conflicting observations because it depended on when they had last seen me (it is normal for your weight to fluctuate within a 3-pound range), I'm sure they both thought nothing of making those comments.

And that experience was nothing compared to what a friend of mine went through when she returned to Manila for a vacation after having lived abroad for a couple of years. If I were not with her when it happened, I would have thought she was exaggerating. In the space of three hours, seven people told her she had gained weight. These people were the bank teller, the supermarket checkout girl and bag boy, and the beauty parlor's two receptionists, shampoo girl and hairdresser. I could see that she was getting highly irritated and I don't blame her. None of these people had the right to make comments about her body, but they were totally clueless about the emotional distress they were causing her.

It never fails to amaze me how we Pinoys make comments about other people's bodies as casually

HOW/ p.D2

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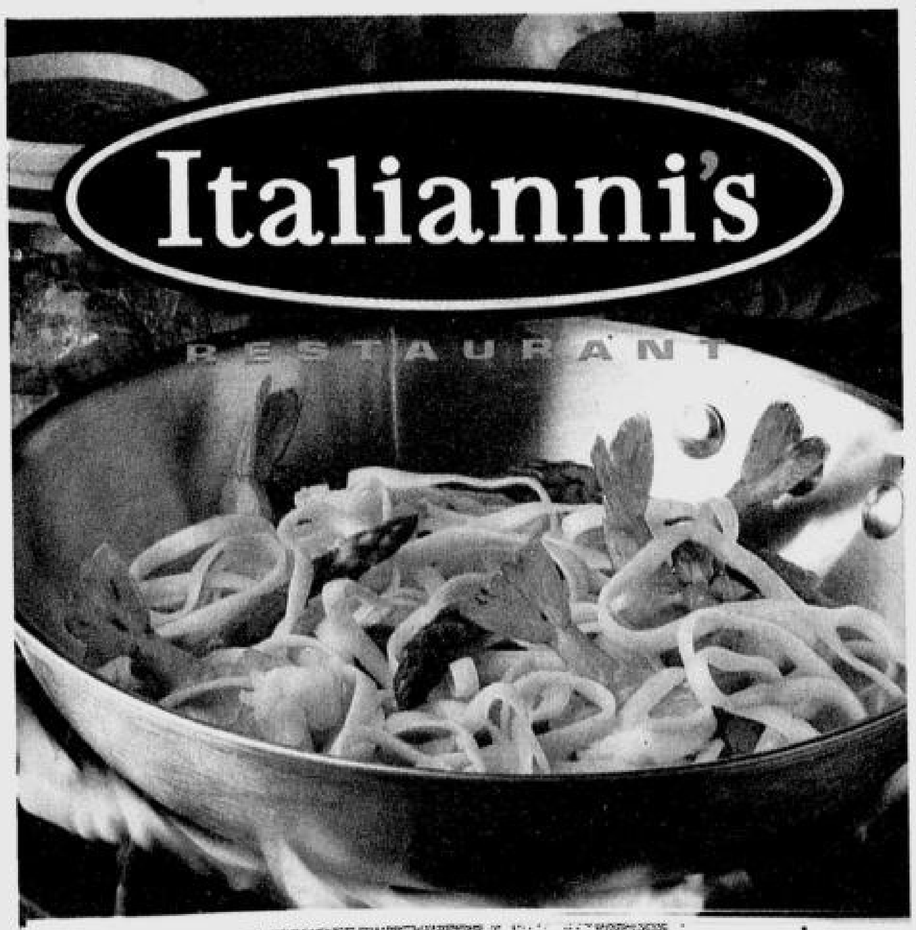

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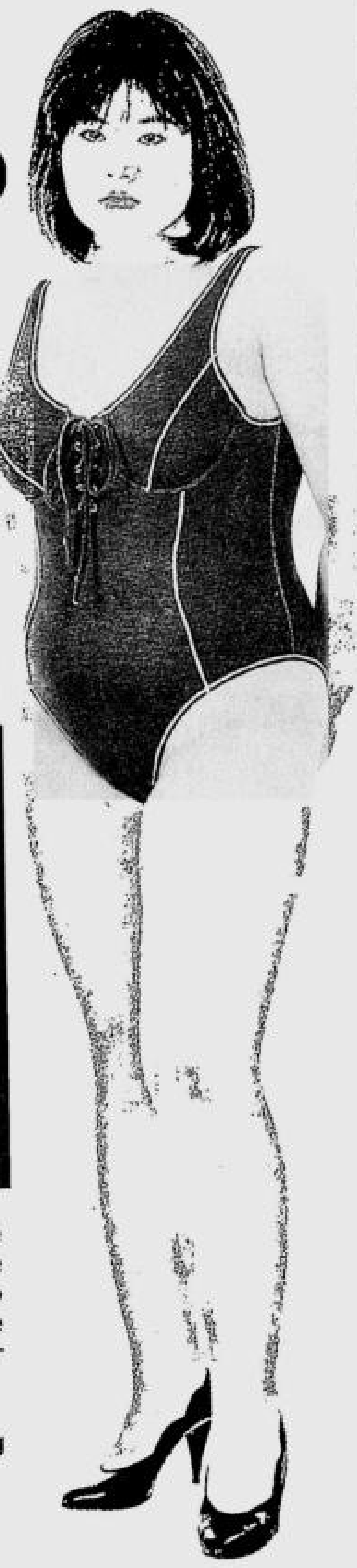

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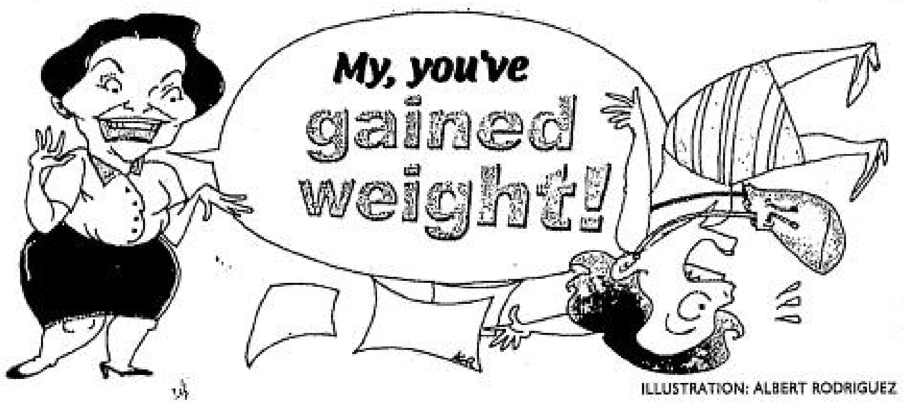
My, you've gained weight!

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

How to stop other people . . .

From page D1

as if we were talking about the weather. Household help, sales clerks, masseuses and beauty parlor staff—almost everyone in our Pinoy society seems to feel it is their duty to tell you what they think about your body.

Family and friends aren't exempt either. Don't you just hate it when you bump into a friend whom you haven't seen in a long time and the first thing she says is, "My, you've gained weight." People have told me they can trace their obsession with being thin to their childhood when parents, siblings, aunts and uncles or cousins would say unkind things about their bodies. Not to mention the *yaya*, cook, driver, housegirl, etc.

Whoever said that "sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me" was either a liar or in denial. Words can definitely leave wounds that fester years after.

I know intelligent, accomplished women with bodies that are fit and trim by any standard who consider themselves fat and unfit because of hurtful words said by some high school boyfriend. I know someone who is fixated on having a flat stomach because some tactless fitness trainer told her that her stomach looked like the stomach of a woman who had already given birth even though she was childless. I myself can still recall the exact place and time when people said negative words to me about my body.

Why are words so powerful? Psychologists say it is because one of our basic emotional needs is approval from other people. We are social creatures. We need to know that other people believe in us and think highly of us. Also, we tend to define ourselves by what other people say about us.

So if it bothers you, how do you deal with people who say negative things about your body? Body image experts say you shouldn't respond passively by keeping quiet nor should you respond aggressively by attacking them. They recommend you ask the person the open-ended question, "You are saying that because...?" By forcing them to finish the question, it makes the other person reveal what their motives really are for saying those negative things. It also gives you a chance to tell them how it makes you feel when they say those things. Most of the time, you will find out that the person has no idea they are making you feel bad. Of course, if the other person has ulterior motives, watch her squirm as she tries to justify why she said that to you.

People I have shared this method with tell me they have successfully used it not only to stop other people from making negative comments about their body but more importantly, to educate the other person about why they shouldn't do it. A mother of a teenage girl told me her daughter was almost in tears when someone told her she had gained weight. The mother was about to let the incident pass even though she was quite upset when she remembered the open-ended question method. She reported that the other person was very apologetic, did not realize the damage her comment had caused and promised never to do it again to anyone else.

What if the person saying the negative things about your body is you? Yes, you can be your worst enemy. For example, when a friend says you look good, do you respond by saying, "Me? Look at my arms. They're still so big."

I had a friend who used to do this all the time until one day, in exasperation, I said to her, "You know, I never noticed before that you have a double chin but now that you mention it, you're right. You do. Thanks for telling me. If you had never told me, I would never have noticed it." She got the hint. Now, she gracefully accepts compliments by simply saying, "Thank you." You should do the same.

Don't indulge in negative self-talk either because it sabotages your efforts to improve your health, fitness and appearance. Keep in mind that "discouraged people perform poorly." In this case, you are the one discouraging yourself.

Every time you say something negative about your body, stop. Analyze why you are saying those things and what triggered you to say them. Change the negative statement into a positive one. For example, if you say to yourself, "Yuck, my stomach is so soft," stop and ask yourself what provoked you to say that. It might be that you were trying to put on a tight pair of pants and noticed some "folds" spilling out from the top of the waistband. Change your negative statement into a positive one by saying, "These pants are too tight for me to wear right now. I will look great in something else that is more comfortable and more flattering to my figure. I will work on reducing my abdominal fat and one day, I will wear those tight pants."

* * *

Life Fitness Academy will hold a fitness management seminar titled "How to Increase Membership Sales" May 8-9 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. Call Doris or Malou at 826-2761/0751.

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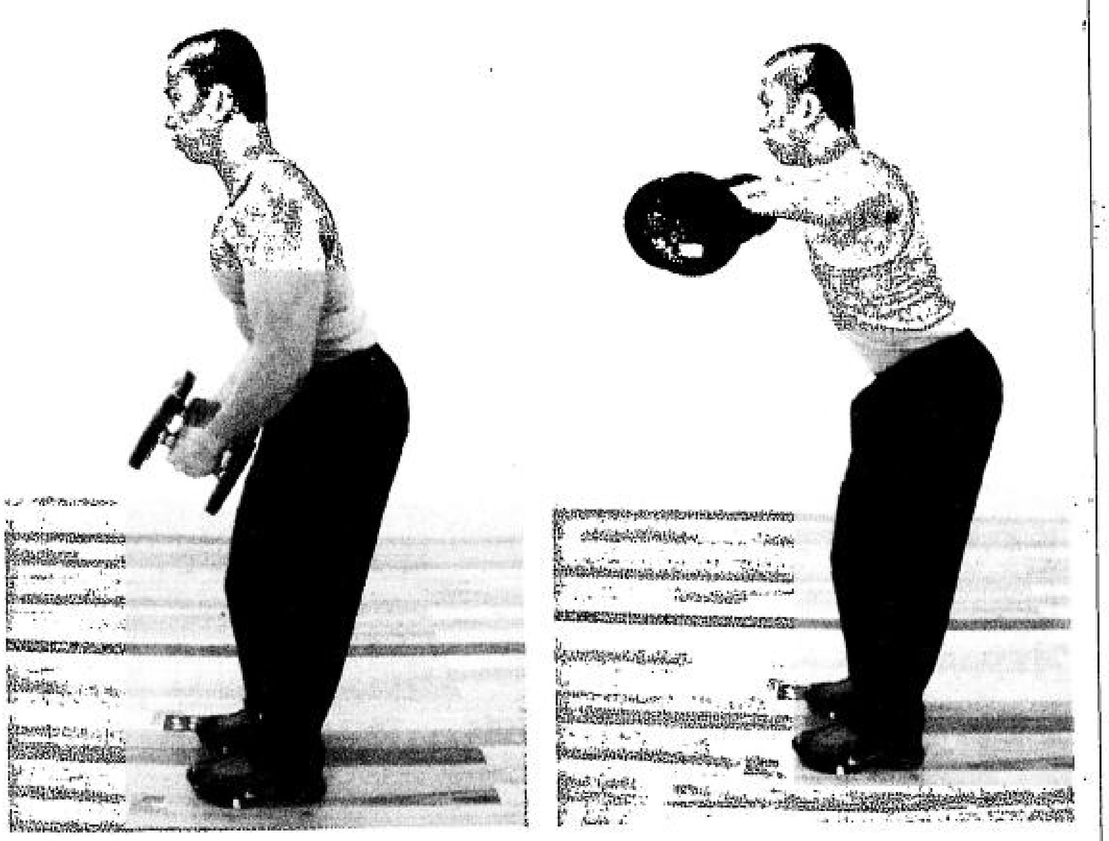
The Sports Medicine Association of the Phils. will hold its 11th annual convention titled "Global Trends and Local Issues in Sports" May 17 -18 at the Manila Midtown Hotel, Ermita. Call 521-9123, fax 522- 2374 or e-mail sportsmed phil@yahoo.com.

* * *

Watch "In Fitness & In Health" 6-6:30 a.m. on Studio 23, Mondays to Fridays. The premiere episode airs on May 6.

For inquiries or past articles and exercises, visit www.tinajuanfitness.com

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK



Thirty-degree bent lateral raise

STRENGTHENS the sides and back of shoulders (middle and rear deltoids). The abdominal and lower back muscles are also strengthened as stabilizers.

Equipment:
Dumbbells

Exercise:

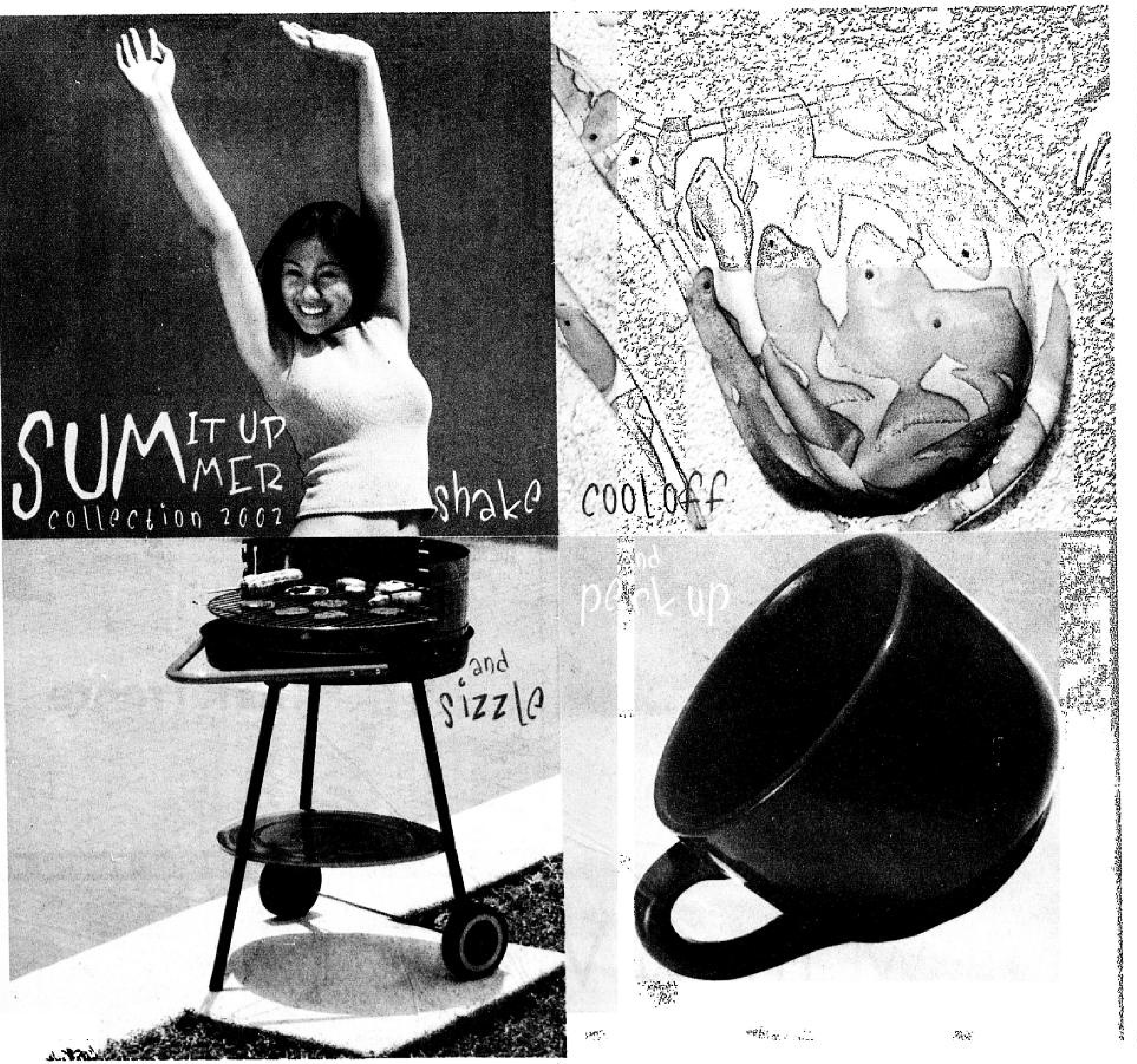
1. To get into the starting position, stand with feet shoulder-width apart. Keeping abdominal and lower back muscles tight, bend your knees and hip and lean 30º forward.
2. Arms should be held in front with the dumbbells in line with the sides of the body. Elbows are slightly bent.
3. Move the elbows out to the side of the body at shoulder level. Palms should now be facing the floor.
4. Slowly return arms back to starting position.

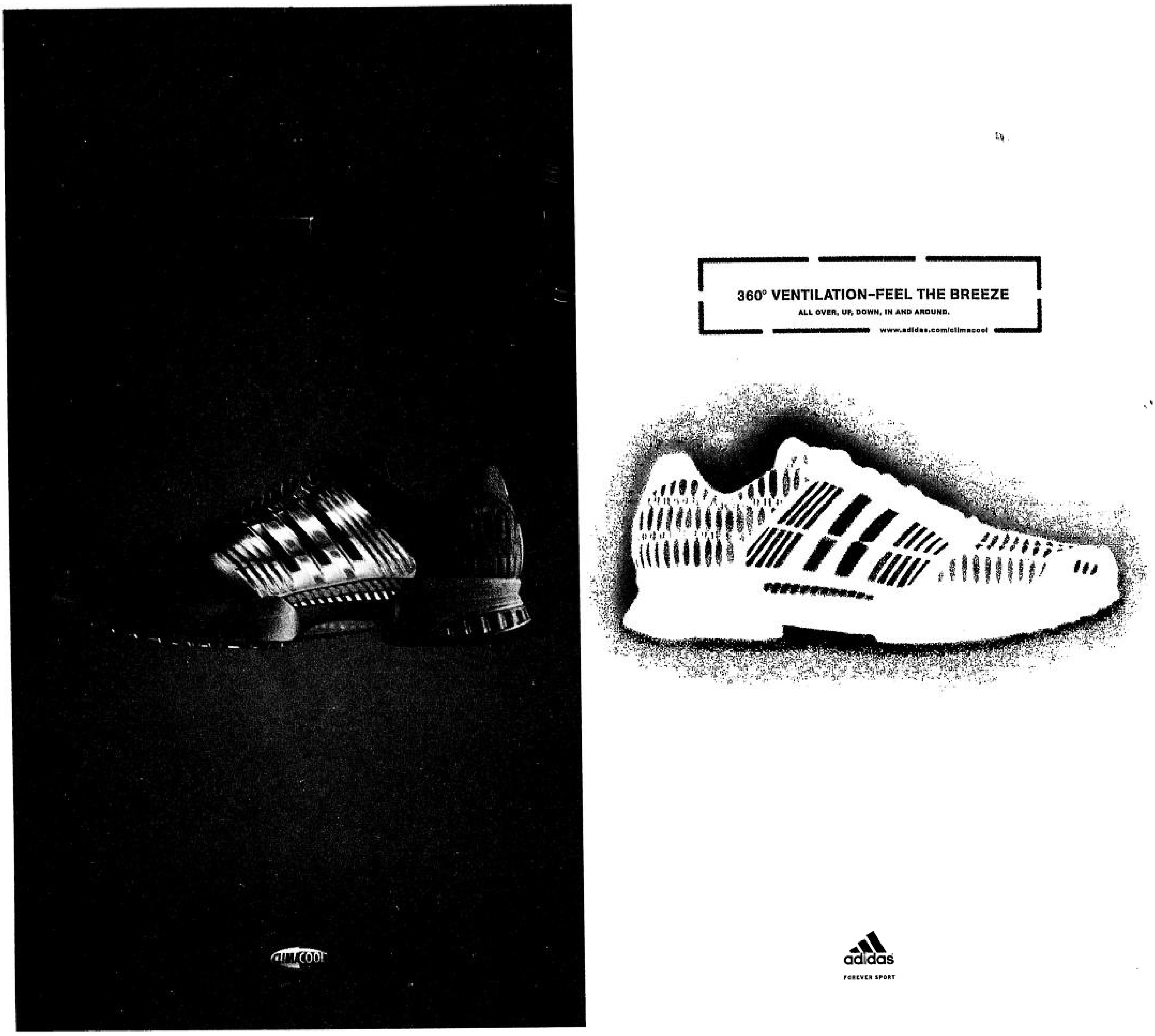
Performance tips:

1. This is an advanced exercise, which requires strength in the abdominal and lower back muscles to keep the back straight throughout the exercise.
2. Notice how the model is leaning forward from the hips, keeping his back straight. The model is not leaning forward with a rounded spine, which would be dangerous to the lower back.
3. Even though the picture of the starting position may suggest it, the model is not starting with the dumbbells touching each other. Start with the dumbbells in line with the sides of the body.

Repetitions:

1. If you want to broaden the shoulders, use a weight heavy enough that you can only finish eight repetitions before your muscles get fatigued. Rest. Do one or two more sets.
2. If you only want definition in the shoulders, use a light to moderate weight that allows you to finish 15 repetitions before your muscles get tired. Rest. Do one or two more sets.





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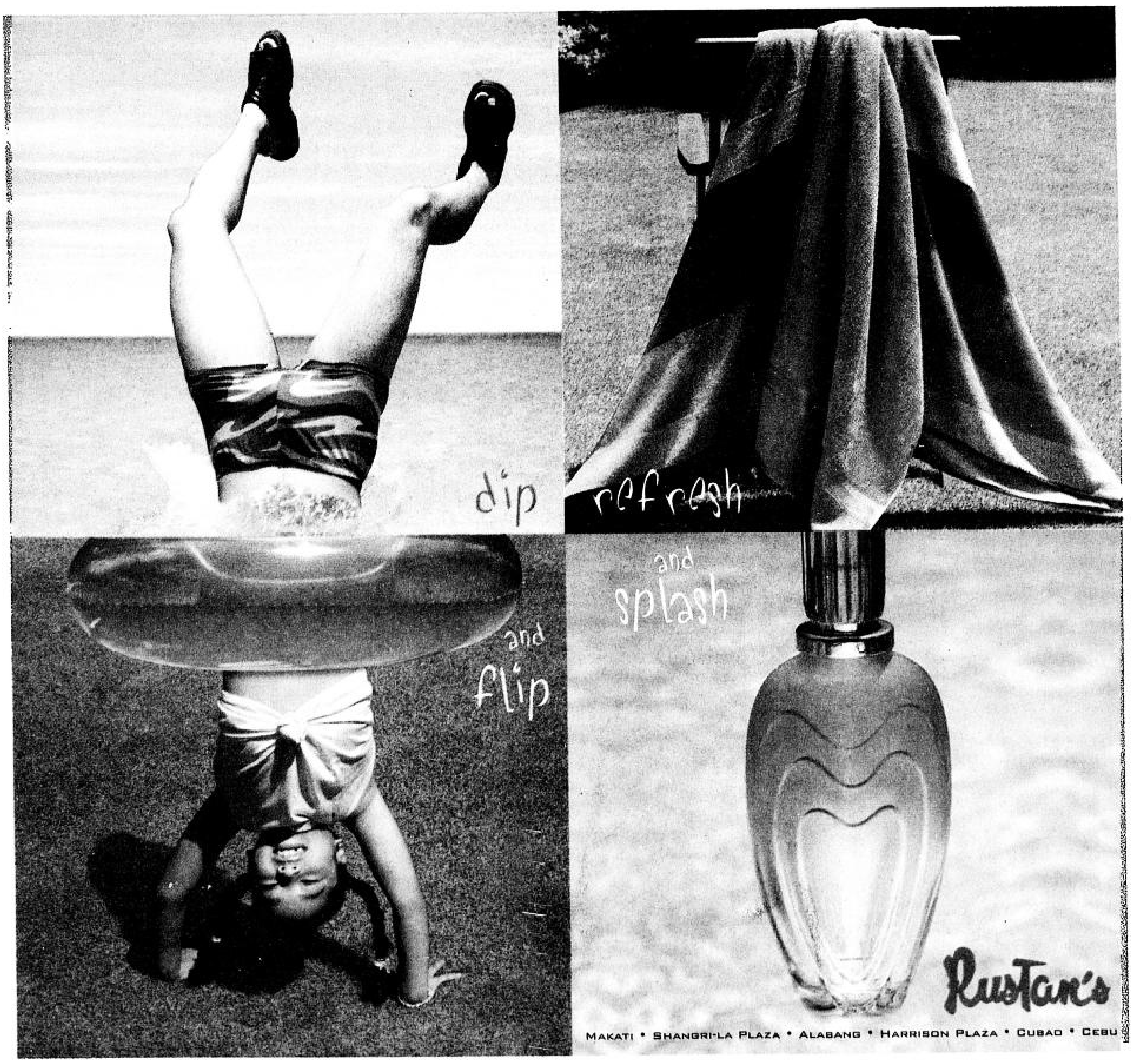
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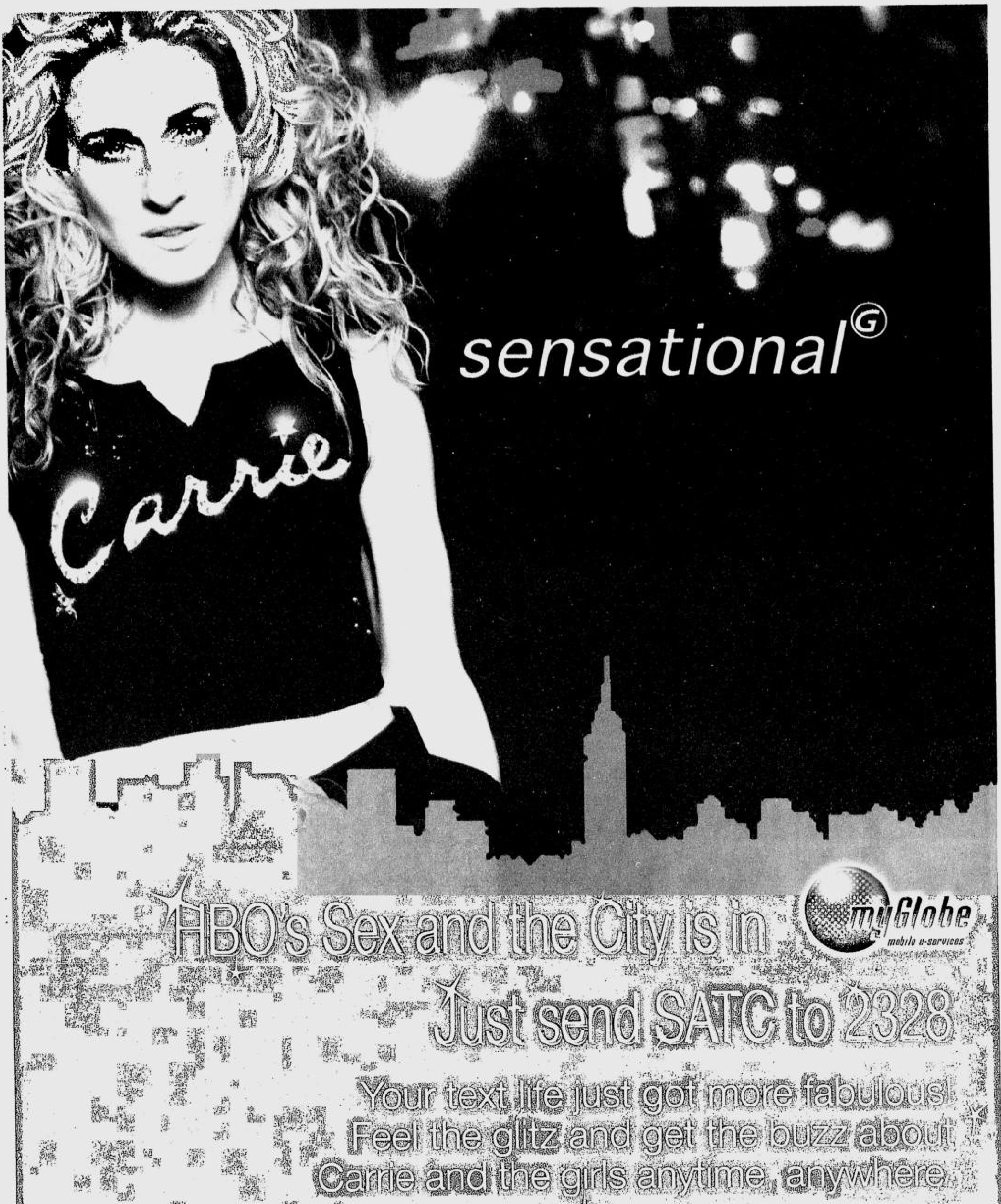

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New season premieres on Tuesday, May 14 at 10pm.
New episodes every Tuesday.

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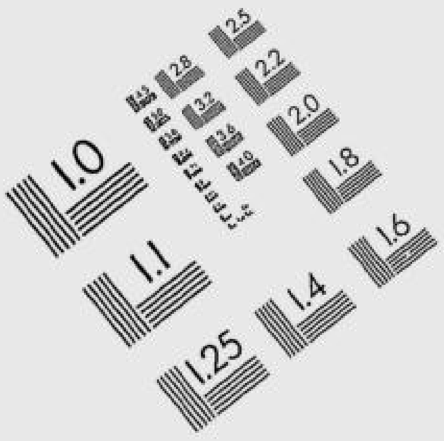
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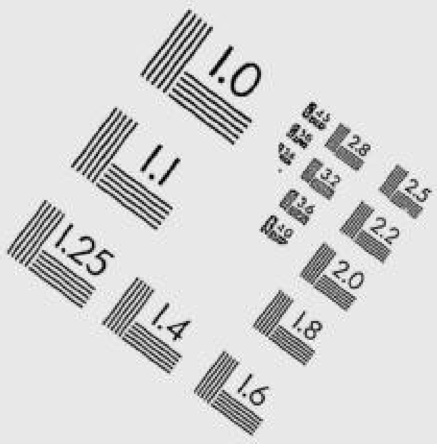
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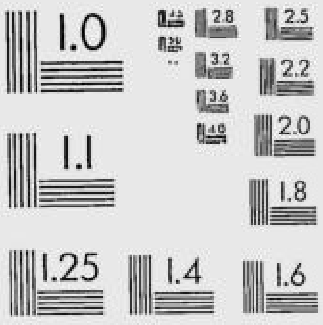
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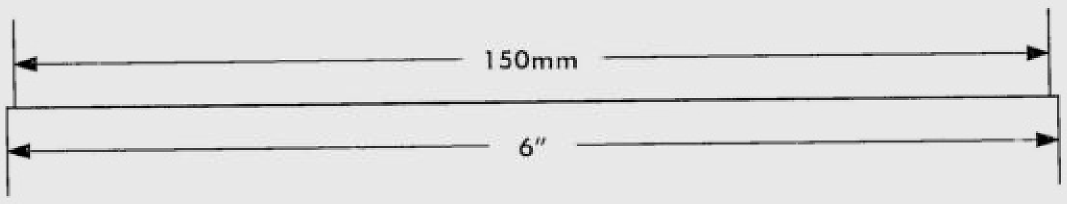

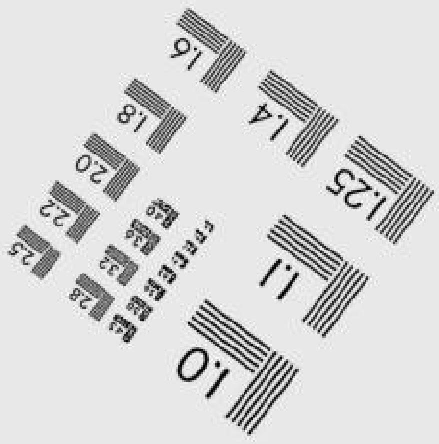
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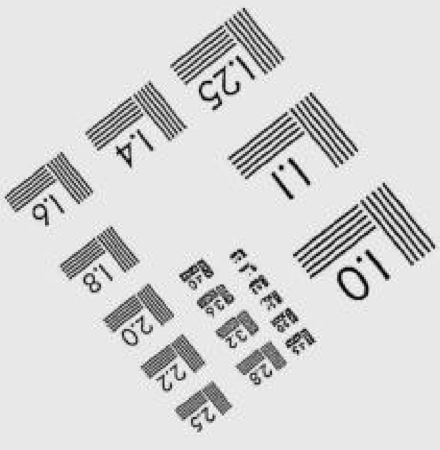
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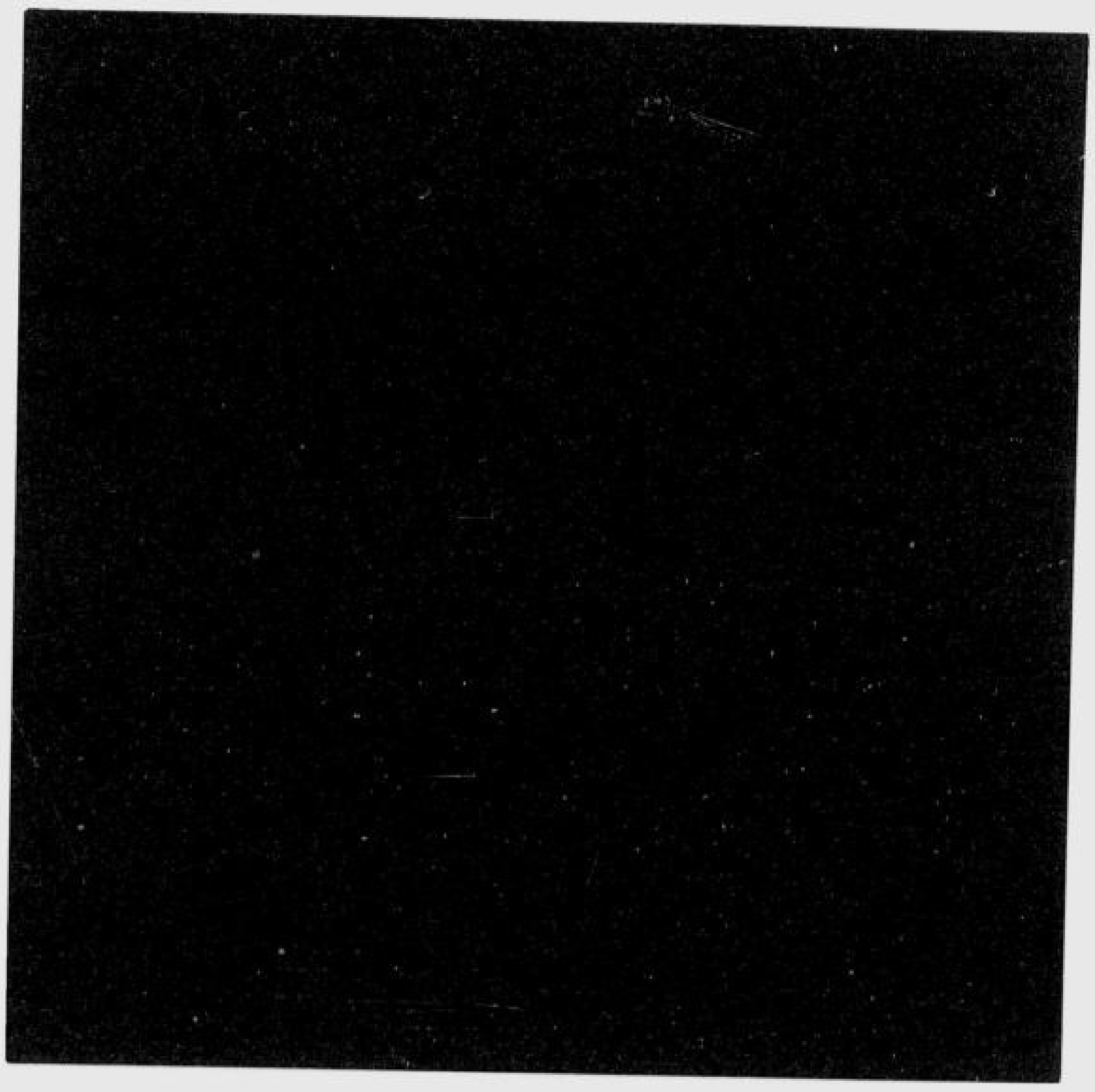

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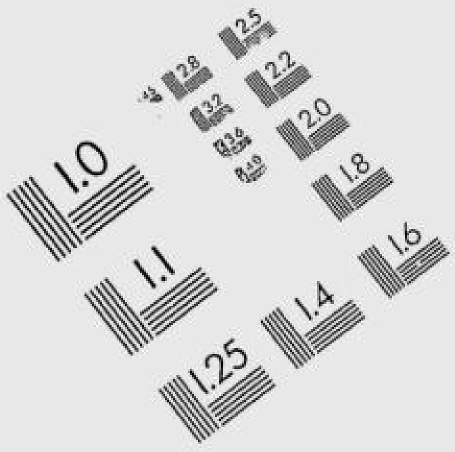
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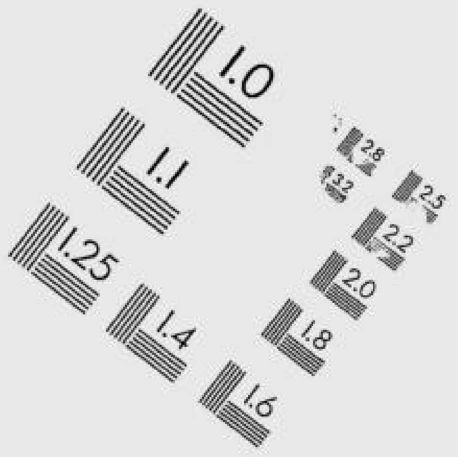
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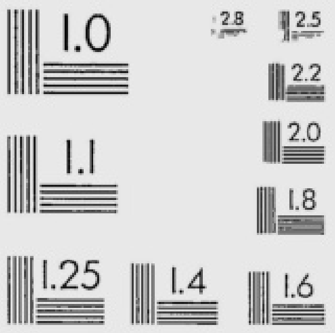
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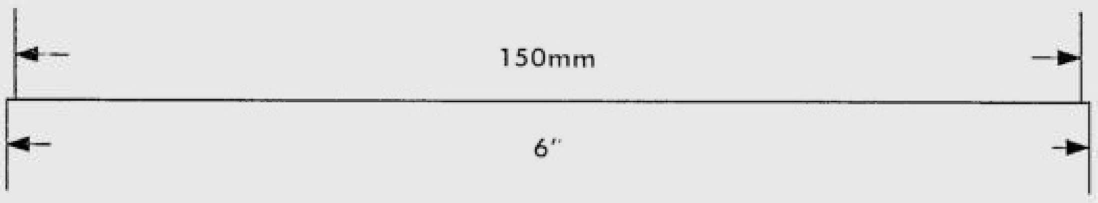

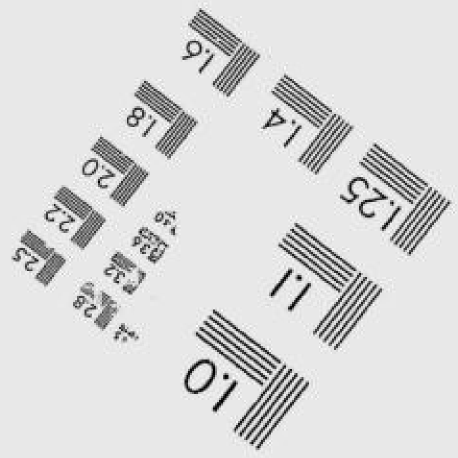
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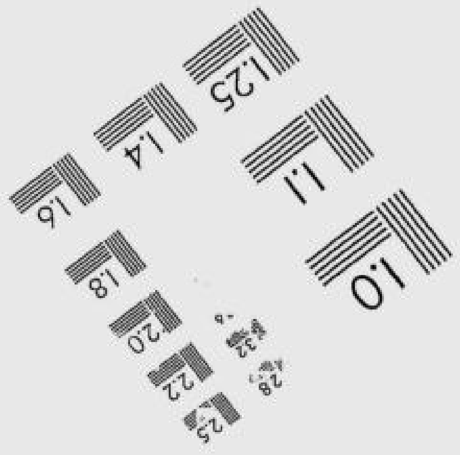
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